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TRB

from Washington
May 19, 1973

The Presidency Myth

The big marble Caucus Room of the Senate Office Building where Senator Ervin begins hearings on Watergate this week is the same room that saw the climactic scenes of the Teapot Dome investigation 50 years ago, just after Harding's death. This vast chamber has seen everything. It saw the circus midget climb into James Pierpont Morgan's lap and it saw the McCarthy hearings. Now it is executive scandal again. America has a presidential scandal every 50 years—Grant, Harding, Nixon—but this is of a special kind—corruption without greed. Albert Fall, Harry Daugherty, Henry Sinclair wouldn't understand it; they were evil men but not sinister, rapacious but not complicated. That is why Watergate is more disturbing and dangerous. No sex, no dollars; just power. It does not strike at oil leases, it strikes at democracy.

I went back to look at the room again last week where most of my professional life has been passed. It is a monstrous chamber, ceiling 40 feet high, half Greek temple, half railroad station. There are the same four crystal chandeliers of Albert Fall's time, as big as bomb bursts; a dozen immense marble columns; and walls slabbed with marble. Tentlike red velvet drapes on windows and red carpet over the floors—also marble.

Yes, here's where it happened, 50 years ago, the two appearances of Albert Fall, Texas land baron and corrupt secretary of the Interior; the first appearance with fierce moustache and arrogant blue eyes, denying all guilt to austere Senator Tom Walsh, the self-taught lawyer and second-generation Irishman from Montana; the second time a shrunken, shriveled old man who had taken to drink, pleading the Fifth Amendment. He got a year and a $100,000 fine.

They were just thieves, that was the difference. Good-natured thieves, often jolly, they didn't give you the creeps. All playing poker with Harding and betraying him. He died at 7:32 pm in room 8064 of the Palace Hotel in San Francisco just 50 years ago this August, on his way back from Alaska. He was lucky.

You think back and chuckle over those days. Just for amusement I went out before writing this and visited where crooked Attorney General Daugherty's house used to be; there is no bronze plaque on it: 1509 H Street. It should say "Warren Harding drank here." An office building now.

And the "Little Green House on K Street"; the rental agent in the 12-story sandstone-faced Commonwealth Building didn't even know that he sat on hallowed ground. Then there was a small greenstone-trimmed Victorian house. Prohibition men with pistols and badges used to deliver liquor here for the presidential poker parties, in Wells Fargo Express wagons.

Harding liked people. The President-myth begins in kindergarten; the kids are taught the mystique: he is a symbol, a hero, larger-than-life, a deity. There is always that pressure to make a monarch out of him. But Harding, except that he was a slob, was likable enough. He wore plus fours. Press conferences in his oval office were happy affairs. Princeton gave him a degree. He sponsored a disarmament conference. Nobody since Washington has looked so like a President. His wife, the Duchess, kept a jealous eye on Wur'rn and secretly conveyed clairvoyant Madam Marcia into the White House for astrological consultation. Warren, poor chap, in his enforced celibacy, smuggled Nan Britton into the executive mansion; secret service men guarded the corridor and he made love to her among the rubbers on the coat closet floor, five feet square.

Yes, we have our national heirlooms. The closet is still there and the Lincoln bed. Until the scandal broke people admired Harding; they thought he probably knew best.

But what kind of people have we today who will parade before the Ervin committee? The public can't understand Watergate because it is a different kind of thing. Messrs. Mitchell and Stans, running the 1972 campaign, accepted $200,000 stuffed in an attaché case from a financier (the now-missing Robert Vesco). Not for themselves you understand, but for the party—the Cause.

Down in Key Biscayne not long ago on one of the President's visits, the reporters gathered at a friendly nightclub to relax after hours, and they looked in a cubicle and there was the Nixon group, drinking milk. Now ordinary politicians, it should be noted, don't normally drink milk in a saloon. This is a different breed. Henry Kissinger, by contrast, the one man of the White House crowd who can laugh, flirt, join in conviviality, emerges as a more normal being; he is unspotted by this strange new dark corruption.

Dante in his Inferno surely has a different circle in hell for those who indulge in carnal lusts, and those who forge cables to incriminate a dead President. Or who break in to steal a psychiatrist's records and then take the trial judge down to be looked over for the job of heading the FBI, with a gratifying glimpse of the President.

There was never any promise of executive clemency, declares the White House, for the Watergate burglars or for anybody else. But are we sure? Who freed Jimmy Hoffa after the parole board unanimously rejected clemency three times, and won support of the nation's biggest union? Who ran the phony (and unsuccessful) sabotage campaign in the California governor's election of 1962, with a fake committee? Judge Byron Arnold of the State Superior Court in a formal verdict said Messrs. Haldeman and Nixon did. The President "knows best." People have been conditioned to revere him. The people are "children." He wears an American flag lapel pin. His secretary of Labor carries a pearl-handled revolver. The President hates personal confrontations and is isolated by an obsessive love of privacy. His palace guard shelters him.

He won the election but somehow it does not make him more outgiving. He feels the bureaucracy is against him; the Cabinet is against him; the courts are against him; the press is against him. But if Mr. Nixon has been mixed up in any Watergate skulduggery, Melvin Laird says he "does not want to know about it"; it would be better for the country not to know. Governor Reagan says the crowd around the President "are not criminals at heart." People fight to keep their faith in the presidency. They did under Harding, too.

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Washing Dirty Dollars

Two weeks before the 1972 presidential election, Hugh Sloan, Jr., former treasurer of the finance committee for the reelection of the President, testified under oath about the seamier side of campaigning. Among the facts he disclosed were that in March 1971, it was the President's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, who asked him to leave his White House job and organize the money operation for an election 20 months off. That spring the President's personal lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach, began passing the hat, concentrating on large contributions that were not to be publicly disclosed; it was not unusual, Sloan confirmed, for Kalmbach to obtain $20,000 from one individual. While still secretary of Commerce, Maurice Stans met with Sloan in "general planning sessions" on how to set up shop in the light of newly passed congressional legislation on campaign funding. John Mitchell, then attorney general, spoke with Sloan by telephone and met with him once at the Justice Department to discuss "approval of budgets for expenditures of the campaign organization." These were big men out for big money.

It all seemed to work so well. Contributors could avoid a gift tax, customarily applicable to any gift to a single entity of over $3000 in one year, by distributing their largesse among over 450 different committees. The donor of more than $3000 would be given the names of those to which each check should be made out. Each committee had to have a charter and a special bank account. The charters and initial legal advice on these matters were provided by then White House counsel, John Wesley Dean III. Donors were encouraged to contribute in the form of corporate stocks on which they had made profits. Rather than paying a tax on that profit, donors transferred the stock to the Nixon committee and no tax liability accrued. To handle the sale for cash of stock, the Nixon organization had brokerage accounts with at least two Washington firms, Walston & Co. and Folger, Nolan, Fleming, Douglas Inc.

Prior to April 7, 1972, the effective date of the new campaign-fund reporting law, between $1 million and $2 million in cash had been collected. Cash ledger books were destroyed before April 7, though Sloan did provide finance chairman Stans with a summary list of the contributors. Another listing of cash donors who gave $1000 or more also survived. Also before April 7, some $900,000 of this cash was dis-

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bursed by Sloan "to individuals in a custodial context," without first being deposited in a bank account. About $5 million—in addition to the $900,000 cash previously mentioned—went to various firms and individuals before April 7, in order to avoid publicizing the payments and to reduce to $10 million the amount the committee showed on hand for the impending campaign. Though the exact amount of these payments—to polling, direct mail, printing and other firms—is not on record, the General Accounting Office reports that, on April 6, $925,000 went to the Nixon advertising agency. The organization kept tight control over expenditures; according to Sloan, payments "were made on either approved authorized memo directed to me or upon presentation of an approved bill or contract . . ."

The point we wish to underscore is that Sloan's October 1971 statements were made in response to a Common Cause lawsuit to force disclosure of contributions to and expenditures by the Nixon committee prior to April 7, and that his testimony and that of others—including Finance Chairman Stans—was kept under court seal (at the request of Nixon committee lawyers) and was not known by the public until well after the election. What might the effect on voters have been had Mr. Sloan been compelled to say what he did not in secret, but at a hearing where cameras and newspaper reporters would broadcast his words immediately? His statements about Haldeman, Dean, Stans and Mitchell all actively taking part in campaign planning while still holding White House and Cabinet positions would at least have put the lie to assertions that were made that officials, especially Mitchell and Stans, did not engage in partisan politicking until they left public office. Sloan's description of 450 paper fund-raising committees, maneuvers to avoid the gift tax and gimmicks to avoid capital gains tax on stocks would at least have called into question the propriety, if not the legality, of the whole pattern of presidential fund-raising—one common to both parties. How might the voters have been affected by knowing of the $900,000 in cash that was passed along to individuals "in a custodial context?" Certainly the efforts of the Nixon organization to disassociate itself from the espionage and sabotage this cash paid for would have been less successful.

Now, as new revelations break over the executive branch, the prospect grows more likely of indictments and drawn-out court trials, and those will keep the newsmen busy for many months to come. Meanwhile we ought to be thinking about what can be done to discourage or deter similar shenanigans in future elections.

Two Senate committees are already at work. A Commerce subcommittee under Senator John Pastore is seeking to revoke Section 315 of the Communications Act, and so permit networks to give free time to major party presidential candidates without having to give equal time to all minor candidates. The amount of money that went into paid political broadcasts last year was scandalous. It is also being proposed that neither major party be allowed to spend more than 25 cents per vote in any election—in effect, a $35 million ceiling on presidential campaigns.

A subcommittee of the Rules Committee under Senator Claiborne Pell is discussing amendments to the disclosure act of 1971, among which is one initially submitted by Republican minority leader Senator Hugh Scott to establish a federal election commission to supervise reporting and enforcement of the campaign election laws. A similar measure passed the Senate in 1971 but failed in the House. If such a commission with appropriate powers had been at work in 1972, perhaps Sloan would have appeared before it, rather than before Common Cause lawyers. Common Cause chairman John Gardner supports the idea of a commission and would give it not only subpoena power but also the authority to go directly to the courts to seek an indictment where criminal violations of the law are alleged. "It is particularly important," he believes, "that the commission be independent of the Department of Justice which has failed so miserably to enforce campaign spending laws."

There are other reforms that deserve active study. The endless proliferation of political committees should be done away with, but in a way that does not place an unbearable burden on candidates. One suggestion before the Pell subcommittee is for one central campaign committee for each candidate—and perhaps a single bank account. Several states, including Massachusetts and Florida, do require candidates to use one bank depository, and although this would pose problems in a national campaign where candidates must have organizations in each state, they are not insoluble. The Nixon organization's use of no less than five different Washington, DC banks compounded confusion and made it harder to discover what had been done with the dollars raised.

Fixing a maximum that any individual can contribute is nearly impossible to police; moreover it could prevent a candidate's being able to make a decent showing. A more practical restraint on the big-time buyers of political influence would be a gift tax on all contributions over $3000 which benefit one candidate. And why not levy a capital gains tax either on donors of stock, or on the political committee which sells the stock? Finally, although total federal financing of presidential elections is infeasible, some minimal federal subsidies are needed.

While the drama of the Watergate hearings over the next few months will star the Ervin Select Committee, backstage work on campaign-fund reform may prove more lastingly beneficial. To liven things up the senators should call Sloan, Stans and others to testify—using their Common Cause depositions as a guide to questioning. Before that, however, and without wait-

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ing for further hearings or legislation, the putative presidential candidates of 1976 (Agnew, Connally, Percy, Richardson, Humphrey, Kennedy, Mondale, Muskie, Jackson—the list is long) should be laying down precise guidelines on campaign fund-raising and fund-dispensing, so that no one, not they or their backers or the public, is again in the dark about where the money comes from and where it goes.

Mencken and the Art of Boob Bumping

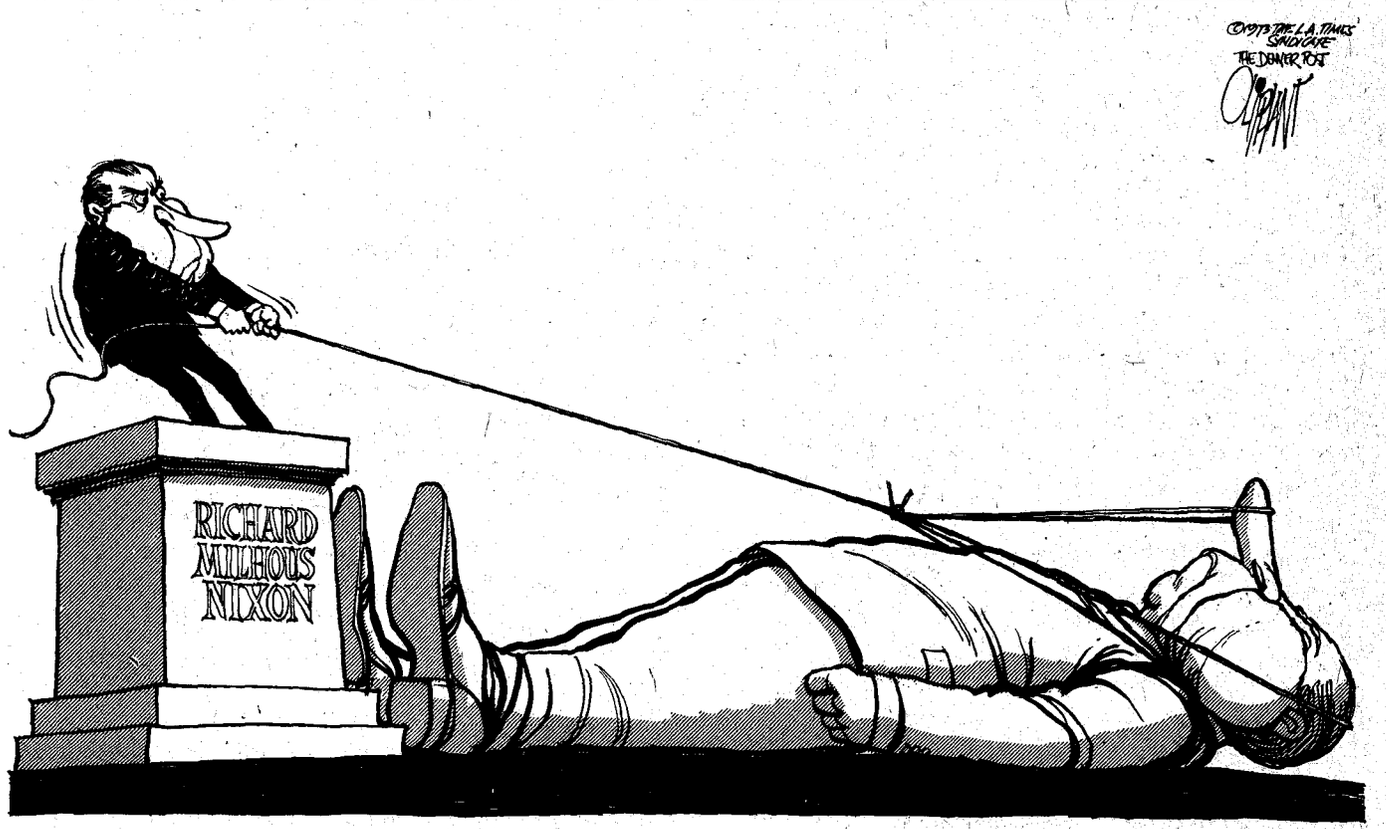
The lean and slipper'd pantaloon whose memory reaches so far back into ancient history that he distinctly recalls nor merely Harding, but Harry Daugherty, Jess Smith, Gaston B. Meanes and others of that motley crew, has developed a sort of incantation to which he resorts when confronted by such phenomena as Watergate. A distortion of Wordsworth, it runs: "Mencken, thou shouldst be living at this hour."

But one who has often resorted to it hereby ventures the opinion that it is quite inappropriate today. By assiduous study the late H. L. Mencken had become our most eminent authority on the political art and science of bumping the boobs and he developed a high appreciation, amounting almost to affection, for masterly practitioners.

It may be plausibly argued, therefore, that it is well that he is not among us today. It is conceivable that Mencken would be deeply chagrined by seeing the greatest master of the art in our political history brought low, apparently by the startling ineptitude of his hired hands.

Callous observers are of course saying, well, if a man hires lunkheads what can he expect but bumbling service? But these are not lunkheads. Some of them have been with Nixon almost from the start of his career, and have proved repeatedly that they are very smart operators. Some were around when he successively bumped the boobs in California by persuading them first that Jerry Voorhis was a semi-Communist, and second that Helen Gahagan Douglas was a "pink lady."

True, the gang played no conspicuous part in what Mencken doubtless would have judged the most magnificent feat of boob-bumping in history. That was when the then-Senator Nixon, in reply to accusations of having accepted from dubious sources a hand-out of $18,000 a year, persuaded the boobs that it was a contemptible attack on his wife for wearing a cloth,



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not a fur coat, and on his dog Checkers, presumably for being a dog. The continental boo-hooing that followed produced a flood of tears gigantic enough to wash away the sins of half a dozen Iscariots, to say nothing of one candidate for Vice President. A triumph indeed.

Toward the end of his first term Nixon did add to his staff one superb operator in Henry Kissinger, the Certified Public Whirling Dervish who, spinning from Washington to Paris to Moscow to Peking and back, came up with "peace is at hand," which probably did not win, but certainly clinched the election of 1972. Six months later, with the bombs still falling in Cambodia, this begins to look like the biggest bump the boobs have taken, but if so, it can hardly be blamed on Miraculous Henry Kissinger, who undoubtedly believed that he was bringing back what the President had ordered.

How then does it happen that the President felt it his duty, just four months after the most astounding electoral triumph since James Monroe got every electoral vote but one, to go before the country and assume the technical, although not the moral responsibility for some of the dirtiest skulduggery ever exposed in a national campaign? There are certainly innumerable contributory causes, but the basic one seems to be that the boys never suspected that stuff you can get away with in bush-league politics simply will not go in the majors.

But Nixon kept them when he moved up, which inevitably creates suspicion that he too is unaware of a fact that all the greatest artists have learned, namely that the summit, the culminating point of great art, is the concealment of artifice so completely that the finished work appears to be no art at all, but a simple presentation of the simple truth. For political examples consider Lincoln's second inaugural and the best of Roosevelt's "fireside chats."

The singularity of the White House is that it stands in "the fierce, white light that beats upon a throne." The politician who does not realize that and shape his course accordingly may be very good, but never a supreme political artist, not even of that branch of the art popularly known as bumping the boobs.

No, it is just as well that Mencken is not living at this hour. He would have been disappointed.

Gerald W. Johnson

Michelin Go Home

"It's a plain simple fact," proclaims a recent ad in *Business Week* sponsored by the South Carolina Development Board, "South Carolinians want industry." The ad goes on to say that an opinion poll by Louis Harris found that "eighty-nine percent of South Carolinians are eager for industry." And why not? The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported last January that the average weekly earnings for South Carolina factory workers ranks 46th in the nation. A follow-up ad by the South Carolina Development Board in *Business Week* was not far from the truth: "South Carolina workers want better paying jobs."

Three cheers should have raised, then, when Governor John West announced in February that the French tire firm Michelin will locate two large plants in South Carolina. They will employ 1800 people. A score of states competed for the honor.

Michelin was attracted to South Carolina because of the prospect of finding workers who would be eager to switch from low-paying textile jobs, which comprise 50 percent of the present work force. Another consideration was that South Carolina ranks 49th in unionization of its workers. The Greenville-Anderson area where the plants will be located has a great many low-paid textile workers and no labor unions. The average wage of Southern textile workers was $44 a week behind the all-industry average in the United States according to a mid-1972 figure issued by the federal government. Fringe benefits like paid holidays, vacation pay, insurance and pension programs lag far behind those of workers in other industries.

Within days of Governor West's announcement textile manufacturers were complaining about the Michelin project. Textile companies feared that the higher wages paid by the tire company would put a squeeze on a tight textile job market. Textile companies also feared that the big Michelin plants would encourage unionization. (Wages for unionized rubber workers, including fringe benefits, are almost six dollars an hour higher than those of area textile workers.) Eugene Stone III, the president of a large textile company in Greenville, complained to the newspapers that unionization of the Michelin plant would be "just like a cancer; once they [the unions] get a foothold, it tends to spread." *The State*, South Carolina's most influential newspaper, editorialized that Michelin should go elsewhere.

Michelin is a high-paying employer and would raise the average pay scale in the state considerably.

So the textile industry is mobilizing against Michelin's intrusion. Forgotten are the proclamations of the state development board in *Business Week*. Harris polled the wrong people; that is, he polled the people. He should have polled the industrialists.

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Cambodian Coverup

I would use American air power any place in North Vietnam, or in Southeast Asia, where I found that it would be necessary for the purpose of protecting American forces in South Vietnam . . . the purpose [of airpower] was, and the justification was, and must always be, the defense of American forces in South Vietnam—President Nixon to Howard K. Smith, March 22, 1971

We also stated that . . . we would continue to carry out air strikes in Cambodia as necessary until such time as a ceasefire could be brought into effect . . . US air strikes in Cambodia do not represent a commitment by the United States to the defense of Cambodia as such but instead represent a meaningful interim action to bring about compliance with this critical provision in the Vietnam agreement—Secretary of State Rogers, April 30, 1973

The war that was never declared but was concluded with honor last January continues to eat up money, weapons and lives. In recent weeks American pilots have flown B-52s daily over Cambodia and Laos, bombing suspected "enemy" troop concentrations and supply routes. Why we have an enemy in Cambodia no one can clearly explain. It is called the Khmer Rouge and may at any moment capture Pnompenh and overthrow our friend Lon Nol who lives in the palace and who, with *his* friends, runs the government. We call him a "friend" not because he is an ally by treaty, or secret pact, but because he is no friend of the Khmer Rouge, whose friends are the Communists.

The President considers this a vital task for the American bombing armada stationed in Thailand and Guam, but he has not thought us worthy of knowing exactly why. The first government attempts to justify the new military campaign were spun of flimsy press fodder, meant to gain time while State Department lawyers worked up something more believable. In the early days of postwar bombing, we were told by John King of the State Department that Cambodia was our ally "in the sense" that it had fought the same enemy as the United States since 1970. Outgoing Secretary of Defense Richardson added that the bombing was merely a mop-up operation, "winding up a residual aspect of a war in which we have been engaged for many years." Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Sullivan put the case more bluntly: the bombing was conducted at the discretion of the White House, authorized by "I guess what I would say is the reelection of the President."

These fumbling rationales have been dumped in favor of a not much better, but fuller account of our war policy by Secretary of State Rogers, who on April 30 gave the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a long awaited "legal" and "constitutional" defense of the bombing. As in earlier years the administration relied on Article II of the Constitution, which says that the President is commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and that he "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." Also, as in other administrations, the secretary implied that anyone who tries to second-guess the President may someday be blamed for aiding the enemy.

Article 20 of the Paris accords is rapidly becoming the Catch-22 of this war. Rogers has invoked it repeatedly in testimony, saying at one point that "The importance of this article cannot be overestimated. . . ." It states that the two parties, North Vietnam and the United States, must withdraw troops and supplies from Cambodia and Laos (it does not say when) and "respect the neutrality" of the two countries. In essence Rogers argues that the North Vietnamese are violating this agreement by keeping troops in forbidden parts of Cambodia, and that as long as they remain there—and as long as there is no cease-fire—the United States will also violate the agreement. We are in the process, therefore, of defining a new condition for our total withdrawal from Indochina, namely the achievement of a cease-fire in Cambodia. Rogers glides over this point in a few sentences laying out our duties under Article 20 and concludes: "it has long been apparent that the conflicts in Laos and Cambodia are closely related to the conflict in Vietnam and, in fact, are so interrelated as to be considered parts of a single conflict." With that elision Cambodia becomes the cause of our renewed intervention in Southeast Asia, just as Vietnam was once the cause of intervention in Cambodia.

There's another question the government doesn't wish to confront, and that is the expected duration of our commitment to Cambodia. When Rogers was pressed on April 30, he said that he couldn't and wouldn't set a specific terminal date. According to his prepared statement, "To stop these airstrikes automatically at a fixed date would be as self-defeating as it would have been for the United States to withdraw its armed forces prematurely from South Vietnam while it was still trying to negotiate an agreement with the North Vietnamese." This marks the evolution of Nixon's bombing policy from what he once described as the "defense of American forces" to what Secretary Rogers called last month: "a meaningful interim action" to speed up diplomatic bargaining. In a return appearance last week, Rogers blurred the administration line still further, saying air strikes were being carried out not because of a "literal violation" of the treaty, but because the Cambodian situation was more desperate than Laos or Vietnam.

Since the signing of the cease-fire, public pressure in the US for an end to US intervention has dwindled rapidly. One reason is that news about our Cambodian military operations has also dwindled—almost to the vanishing point. The coverup makes Watergate read like an open book. The Pentagon isn't giving out the usual sortie and tonnage statistics, though reporters allege that as many as 250 sorties a day are now being

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flown, and that at least two fighter bombers have been lost. Briefly the US embassy in Pnompenh was providing some information, but last week that source also was shut off. The official announcement said this was being done at Cambodia's request. So, there is less and less to report about the war, and fewer people get angry. Whereas the Christmas bombing of North Vietnam brought thousands of protest letters to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, only several hundred have come in protesting the Cambodian campaign. The offices of Senators Kennedy, Mansfield and Humphrey have experienced a similar decline in mail.

At this writing, the House is voting on the first of two possible amendments to restrict the President's authority to bomb at will. If the move succeeds, an amendment will be attached to the defense appropriations bill to forbid a $500 million transfer of funds that would partially pay for unanticipated costs in Indochina (bombing). Elliot Richardson went before a Senate committee a few days before the vote to shoo Congress away from the idea. In essence he said the administration would be undeterred, whatever the vote. Only a small amount of the fund transfer would pay for bombing, he said ($25 million, though some say the amount is more like $150 million), and the Pentagon could afford to bomb even without the transfer. Furthermore should an anti-bombing amendment fail to pass, the administration would construe that as "a vote to at least acquiesce in that activity." It is true, one Senate aide says, that a fiscal cutback would have little effect. The Pentagon has an estimated backlog of $40 billion in funding that would delay the impact of any appropriation roadblock being considered.

Congress will have a second chance to restrict the bombing in the next few weeks when the State Department authorization comes to a vote. If not the House, at least the Senate is sure to add an amendment touching on the Cambodian air strikes. It may take the more demanding form of the Case-Church proposal, which forbids the use of military forces without congressional approval "in hostilities in or over or from off the shores of North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia." This approach, because it's more direct than the fiscal one, is less likely to win support in the House but more likely to be accepted as binding by the administration. Richardson was not asked about the Case-Church plan, but presumably he wouldn't treat it as lightly as the others. Rather than tinkering with appropriations machinery, Case-Church goes right to the heart of the problem, making it illegal for the President to continue bombing Cambodia without first getting permission from Congress. So far there's been no fuss over this idea, which suggests that the commander in chief doesn't feel threatened by it. Perhaps he thinks the House hasn't got the gall to claim so much power. But who knows? At the present rate of decline in presidential credibility, even the House may want to put the war in mothballs.

Permanent Emergency

Of a recent issue, a congressman, trying to drum up alarm in the House, said, "This is no ordinary crisis." How could it be? The country has been in a state of emergency since at least 1933, beginning with FDR. President Truman declared another emergency in 1950 (still with us) and signed the National Defense Production Act, which has kept the economy on quasi-war footing. Then Mr. Nixon in 1971 was forced by declining monetary reserves and an unfavorable balance of trade to declare a third emergency, which justified his putting a surcharge on imports. Congress never approved or removed it.

The Special Committee on the Termination of the National Emergency which the Senate set up last year to look into this historic accumulation is finding that the deeper it digs, the larger the doubt that *it* can be terminated. Committee aides have found hundreds of extant extraordinary powers that Congress has yielded, but never codified, for times of war or national emergency. An air force computer bank, probably the one the government has programmed for Apocalypse, has scanned the US code and turned up 580 special powers.

For instance during any national emergency the President may take over the airwaves. The Communications Act of 1934 does not describe the kind of emergency this has to be or how long it may last; nevertheless, every station license can be waived or revoked.

"When he considers it in the national interest," the President may also send members of the armed forces to any republic (it doesn't *have* to be a republic) in North, Central or South America (or, under certain conditions, any other country) "to assist in military matters." By executive order, moreover, any populated area in the US may be declared a military zone under martial law. Intended for use in World War II, this statute could be used to revive the Emergency Detention Act, which Congress thought it abolished two years ago.

Under the National Defense Production Act, due to expire in 1974, the President can "allocate materials," which in practice has meant stockpiling strategic metals each year. In the last quarter of 1966, as Vietnam heated up, President Johnson was requiring steel producers to set aside for defense six percent of their output, copper producers 18 percent, and aluminum producers 13 percent. But the President is empowered also to take over industrial plants to assure needed supplies and munitions, and he can fine businessmen up to $10,000 and jail them for a year.

Then there is the loan guarantee program, based on a 1959 executive order which in turn derived its authority from the national state of emergency declared in the Korean war. In the last 15 years, *The New York Times* recently reported, the Pentagon has used this executive order to make $85.9 million in outright grants to defense contractors, without the approval or

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knowledge of the secretary of Defense. That amount does not include an early 1971 bail-out of Lockheed (which Congress did *not* know about)—a $1 billion boost of contract prices of the C-5A and the Cheyenne programs. The government has also bought stock in some defense companies.

The President need not declare a new national emergency with each new executive order; he need only refer to an earlier one or make reference to some antique war-time statute like the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917—the law invoked by President Johnson in 1968 when he put emergency restrictions on overseas investments.

The 580 ways to deal with emergencies that criss-cross the US code ought to be sorted out as quickly as possible. But as the current debate on the President's war powers makes clear, the problem is not wholly legal. Politics abhors a vacuum, a point that was made by Justice Jackson in the steel seizure cases of 1952: "A crisis that challenges the President, equally, or perhaps primarily, challenges Congress . . . We may say that power to legislate for emergencies belongs in the hands of Congress, but only Congress itself can prevent power from slipping through its fingers."

Connally's Conversion

The timing of John Connally's announcement on May 2 that he has abandoned his lifetime allegiance to the Democrats and switched to the party of Abraham Lincoln, Dwight Eisenhower, and G. Gordon Liddy provided all the evidence anyone needs that he seriously hopes to contend for the Republican nomination in 1976. The fact that Connally chose to make public his decision when new revelations of moral turpitude and plain stupidity were assaulting the Nixon administration from all sides, was calculated to impress the loyal foot soldiers of the GOP.

The conversion had been predicted in Texas political circles at least two months ago and had been expected to occur earlier than it did. Obviously Connally delayed any formal announcement while he and his friends in the Texas business establishment assessed the impact of Watergate. Equally obviously he concluded that the scandal presented opportunities for political profit that outweighed its liabilities. The most prominent liability of Watergate from Mr. Connally's point of view is that the party he has joined is not the happy, pulsating political organism it was last fall, when the former Texas governor directed an immensely successful effort to move Democrats to Mr. Nixon's side. But what concerns Mr. Connally now is not so much the party but his standing within the party, and by casting himself in the role of a trusted friend galloping to the rescue of a beleaguered President, he has made it difficult for Republican leaders to deride him as a parvenu undeserving of serious attention.

Without explicitly endorsing him for the nomination in 1976, Mr. Nixon has nevertheless bestowed on Connally in private conversation the sort of lavish praise he seems to give Spiro Agnew only in public. Mr. Nixon admires in Connally qualities he cannot find in himself—notably Connally's effortless evangelism on the platform—and he is comfortable with the tall Texan's views. Beyond agreement on such specifics as the oil depletion allowance and rapid depreciation write-offs for business, the two men share a fundamental belief in America's messianic mission abroad as well as a firm faith in the established order at home. In addition the two—outwardly so different—appear to have developed a warm relationship. Connally was one of the very few men the President allowed to convey his views directly to the oval office without the meticulous and often humiliating screening imposed on lesser mortals—including the vice president—by the Haldeman-Ehrlichman staff apparatus.

Mr. Agnew is not likely to roll over without a fight; and his four years of trench warfare for the GOP has won him many friends among the party's rank and file. Connally, however, is bright, resourceful and determined. He is not accustomed to losing. He has acquired a valuable reputation among major GOP contributors in the large corporate law firms and in the headquarters of major corporations whose occupants tend to be far more comfortable with his ways than with Mr. Agnew's. There is plenty of time for Connally to work the peculiar magic of his rhetorical style and put to rest whatever doubts remain about his commitment to Republicans. It would be a surprise to most observers if he did not campaign for Republican candidates in the mid-term elections in 1974; and if he does well there, it would be an even greater surprise if he did not destroy Mr. Agnew in head-to-head competition in the 1976 primaries.

In the Public Interest
The Car in Your Future

Occupied as it now is with the massive Watergate scandal, Washington ignored some unprecedented congressional testimony recently given by an auto manufacturer. On April 16 a Japanese auto company told Congress and the public what it could do instead of what it could not do.

The executive vice president of Nissan Motor Company, Soichi Kawazoe, informed the House commerce

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and finance subcommittee that his company had designed a 2200-pound production model car (with air bag) which could take a 50-mile frontal barrier crash and permit its occupants to survive. A 50-mph crash into a fixed barrier is equivalent to a car crashing a similar standing car at 100 mph. About 90 percent of motorist fatalities occur at speeds equivalent to or less than the forces generated by a *barrier crash* of 50 mph.

As was the case with Honda's superior pollution control system, Nissan has moved ahead of the giant US auto companies which said it couldn't be done. Nissan's prototype safety car is part of the International Experimental Safety Vehicle Program (ESV) launched by the Department of Transportation under the 1966 auto safety law. Part of this program involves the design of several ESVs by non-auto companies under contract with the federal government. The other part consists of encouraging auto companies worldwide to develop their own experimental safety car projects.

General Motors and Ford disliked the ESV program from the start in 1968 but could not stop it. So they decided to show how impractical these cars would be by producing their own versions. The ponderous GM and Ford ESVs weighed in somewhere between 5000 and 6000 pounds, had expensive metals and other features designed to convince the Department of Transportation that safety cars would weigh too much, be too expensive and consume too many rare metals.

Largely due to Nissan and, surprisingly, Volkswagen, the GM-Ford strategy of negativism has floundered technically. VW, knowing that its hazardous Beetle has to be replaced, embarked on a serious ESV program and has produced a practical safety car weighing 3200 pounds which they claim meets the 50-mph barrier standard.

The importance of keeping vehicle weights down without sacrificing safety is of vast significance. For not only are mass-produced cars priced largely according to their weight but lighter cars consume less gasoline, less raw materials, less parking and driving space and often have lower repair costs. The Nissan-type achievement opens up opportunities for both safety, energy and ecological factors to be given the respect they deserve.

Instead of being joyous at the Nissan and VW efforts, the Department of Transportation's former undersecretary James Beggs delivered an address in Japan two months ago at the Fourth International ESV Conference in which he recommended lowering the safety protection levels and extending the years when the 50-mph level should be met—well into the mid-1980s for the ESV program! This statement signaled to the US auto companies that the government would similarly defer setting comparable safety standards by law until possibly 1990. Begg's statement was a disgraceful surrender to the lumbering auto giants in Detroit, since two smaller foreign auto companies which took Washington more seriously had already met the requirements in 1973.

Fortunately Beggs was speaking as a departing government official and did not have the knowing approval of the new secretary of Transportation, Claude Brinegar. Mr. Brinegar has assured me that Mr. Beggs' statement is not departmental policy and that Brinegar would make known his decision in the coming weeks.

Secretary Brinegar should realize that pushing the companies into a competitive race to develop practical safety vehicles can save hundreds of thousands of lives and millions of injuries. He should encourage the kind of attitude expressed by Nissan's Mr. Kawazoe who told Congressman John Moss that the next time he appears before the subcommittee his little vehicle may meet survivable barrier crash impacts of 60 mph.

Ralph Nader

Pushmi-Pullyu Tax Reform

'What in the world is it?" asked John Doolittle, gazing at the strange creature.

"Lord save us!" cried the duck. "How does it make up its mind?"

When a tax reformer examines the administration's "Proposals for Tax Change," he shares the sense of wonder of Dr. Doolittle and Dab-Dab the duck as they gazed on Hugh Lofting's marvelous two-headed creature, the pushmi-pullyu. The Treasury proposals do, in fact, move in opposite directions. Several are directed at achieving a fairer distribution of income tax burdens between high- and low-bracket taxpayers. But of equal magnitude are proposals which introduce still more tax preferences into an already preference-riddled internal revenue code.

The reform showpieces of the Treasury package are the minimum taxable income (MTI) and limitation on artificial accounting losses (LAL). MTI, which would replace the present 10 percent minimum tax, is generally intended to ensure that individuals cannot combine certain types of tax-exempt income and itemized personal deductions in a manner that will completely eliminate their tax liability. Under MTI an individual would be required to pay tax at progressive rates on at least one-half of his economic income (without reduction for otherwise deductible personal expenditures). The present minimum tax is not progressive nor does it deal with personal deductions. The proposed MTI adopts a progressive rate structure and recognizes that itemized personal deductions constitute tax preferences, just as much as percentage depletion. In both these respects MTI is an improve-

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ment on the present minimum tax and as such is to be commended.

But Congress must make some improvements in MTI if it wants to ensure that all Americans pay some fair amount in taxes. The MTI tax base does not include two critical items of tax-exempt income: interest on state and local bonds and accrued gain on property transferred at death or by gift. Congress should add these items to MTI if we are to have an effective minimum tax structure. Further, MTI does little to correct the present disparity between capital gains and ordinary income—a person with all of his income in the form of capital gains would be totally unaffected by MTI. Witnesses before recent House Ways and Means Committee hearings have offered constructive suggestions to narrow the tax gap between capital gains and ordinary income. The committee ought to use these recommendations to increase the impact of MTI on capital gains.

The limitation on artificial accounting losses (LAL) proposal is directed at the scandal created by so-called "tax shelters." Doctors, dentists, lawyers, investment bankers and corporate executives have been investing in real estate, farm, and oil and gas operations to secure artificial deductions in order to reduce their taxes on their earned income. LAL is intended to bring these tax shelter arrangements to an end for such individuals. It deserves high marks.

Again however the Treasury did not go far enough. Only individuals are covered. Corporations—especially banks—will be free to continue their very extensive tax shelter operations without hindrance. If tax shelters are improper for individuals—and they are—why are they not equally so for corporations? Nor does LAL prevent all individuals from using tax shelters. Oil drillers, real estate developers and farm operators will still be able to shelter their income from tax by virtue of artificial deductions so long as they continue to expand their business. It is difficult to see what Treasury *tax* principle determines that real estate operators should pay little or no taxes as a result of these tax preferences, even though one can applaud the demise of tax shelters for high-bracket doctors. Again Congress has the tools at hand to take the LAL principle and make it a means by which the term "tax shelters" can pass unlamented from the tax lexicon.

Another desirable step toward tax reform is the Treasury's proposed federal subsidy on taxable bonds issued by state and local governments. But the proposed subsidy—equal to 30 percent of the interest paid—is too small. Federally subsidized taxable bonds can be an attractive alternative to tax-exempt bonds. But the subsidy must probably be set at about 40 percent in order to achieve this goal.

Along with these pushes toward reform the Treasury makes several suggestions that pull in the opposite direction. Its recommendation that still another tax benefit be granted to the oil and gas industry borders on the incredible. If the proposed investment credit for domestic exploration were intended as a *substitute* for the present percentage depletion allowance and the deduction for intangible drilling and development expenses deduction, then it might have merit. But as an additional tax subsidy it is unsupportable. If tax preferences are so helpful in producing new oil reserves, why have the present tax bonanzas for oil left us in an energy crisis? The Treasury has made no case for giving the oil industry a new tax windfall, and history would seem to demonstrate the ineffectiveness of tax solutions to the problem of locating oil reserves. Further, to the extent that our energy problems are created by a lack of domestic exploration activity, Congress can create a tax bias for domestic drilling by repealing present tax preferences for oil except in the case of domestic drilling and exploration.

The Treasury's proposed tax credits for private school tuition and property taxes paid by the elderly are also moves in the wrong direction. These proposals should be viewed as new federal spending programs, albeit through the tax system, and Congress should evaluate them as such.

Hard questions must be asked about the tuition tax credit. Will it effectively aid private schools? Are there more efficient ways of providing the funds? Presumably the proposal is intended to aid private schools. But the tax benefit goes to parents, not schools. Therefore some schools may be able to benefit from the credit only by raising tuition in an amount sufficient to soak up the credit. Is this desirable? Much is made of the fact that parents of private school children also pay taxes to support public schools. But Congress must realize that the reverse is also true. All payers of federal income tax bear an estimated 20 percent of the cost of elementary and secondary education, through revenues lost because of the federal income tax deduction for charitable contributions to such institutions. The tuition tax credit is thus a means of increasing the present share of public cost of parochial schools. Is this wise? Does the proposed credit effect the proper balance, since parents of both private and public schools are now bearing a part of the cost of a school system they are not utilizing? Similar kinds of questions must be asked regarding the proposed property tax credit.

It must be kept in mind that these new proposed tax benefits are simply devices for spending federal funds (via foregone revenues) for special purposes. Special tax benefits should not be unthinkingly adopted because they are for good purposes; direct spending programs are for good purposes too, and may well be able to meet the need more efficiently than new tax preferences. And we also have to keep in mind that no matter how worthy the object, we do pay a price in tax equity every time a new tax preference is enacted.

Hugh Lofting lamented that pushmi-pullyus were

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extinct. Perhaps so, but pushmi-pullyuism is still alive in the US Treasury. Its April 30 proposals reflect a state of tension between a desire for new tax reforms and new tax preferences. Tax reformers should build on the former and reject the latter.

Paul R. McDaniel

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César Chavez And the Teamsters

Coachella, Calif.

A 19-year-old woman thinning grapevines on the Heggblade-Marguleas-Tenneco ranch says, "I just want to work, that's all. The *Chavistas* won't let you work unless you pay dues for the months you're at home." Her boss, the ranch manager, comments: "Mr. Chavez had a great opportunity here, but he lost it. He antagonized the growers and the workers." A United Farm Worker organizer says, "The hiring hall is a beautiful system once it gets going. We just need time to get the bugs out and to educate the workers. We haven't had time because we are always fighting for survival."

Comments like these reflect the extraordinary difficulties in building a union of farmworkers. César Chavez and the UFW have made enormous gains since the 1960s but have never been able to consolidate them. In 1970, after five years of strikes and boycotts, the UFW forced grape growers in the San Joaquin and Coachella Valleys to sign three-year contracts covering field workers. The contracts set $2 an hour as a minimum wage and replaced the odious labor contracting system with union-run hiring halls. Last month the Coachella Valley contracts expired and all but two of the growers signed new contracts with the Western Conference of Teamsters. Seventeen grape growers around Arvin, at the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley, also jumped to the Teamsters, and it appears that the growers around Delano and Fresno will follow suit. That would throw the UFW back almost to where it was before 1970 and raise serious questions about its long-term survival.

With very limited resources the UFW must fight on four fronts. It must, of course, deal with growers—forcefully enough to win contracts but not so antagonistically that the contracts won't be workable. It must reach out to farmworkers, most of whom are transient, desperate for jobs and accustomed to non-union ways. It must grapple with the whole network of food distribution and the consciousness of the food-buying (and boycotting) public. And it must somehow turn back a powerful two-million member union that seeks to steal every victory the UFW wins.

When Chavez won recognition in 1970 from Tenneco, Giumarra, Hollis Roberts and other agribusiness giants it was hoped, perhaps unrealistically, that the two sides would learn to live with one another. The most critical point of contact was the union hiring hall. It was through hiring halls that the UFW hoped to eliminate the most exploitative features of migratory agriculture, much as longshoremen's hiring halls had cleaned up the docks. Rules were established whereby growers would send in work orders to the hiring halls, and the union would fill the orders by dispatching workers in order of their seniority on the ranch. The intent of the seniority system was to stabilize the migratory work pattern: the longer a worker stayed on a particular ranch, the more certain he could be of getting a job there in future years.

The hiring halls did not run smoothly. Growers resented the fact that they could no longer count on contractors or foremen to assemble the youngest, fastest-working crews, and that the union was dispatching more and more older workers and women. According to UFW organizers growers would often try to undermine the system by sending workers—especially non-union and low-seniority workers—to the hiring halls when there were few work orders to be filled. Union staffers, according to several growers, were not easy to deal with. They tended to be inflammatory young Chicanos and Anglos with little farm work experience—the kind who work hard at low pay for radical causes but don't always make good administrators. Chavez, aware of these problems, agreed in the two new Coachella Valley contracts to operate hiring halls jointly with growers.

The hiring halls often confused and alienated workers as well as growers. Workers with low seniority disliked waiting while slots were held open for high-seniority workers. Sometimes UFW dispatchers would split up families because of differences in seniority or other technicalities. A UFW regulation that dues of $3.50 per month had to be paid year-round and that back dues had to be paid before jobs could be assigned, was another irritant. It was hard for staffers to explain, especially to workers who didn't remember how bad things once were, why the hiring hall and regular union dues were necessary.

William Grami, director of organization for the Western Conference of Teamsters, says the Teamsters are concerned about the shed and cannery workers they represent, but there's probably more behind the Teamsters onslaught on the UFW than that. Three years ago, under urging from the National Catholic Bishops Farm Labor Committee, Teamster President Frank Fitzsimmons agreed to let the UFW have jurisdiction over field workers. The agreement failed to deter the Teamsters from signing overnight contracts with 170 lettuce growers in the Salinas Valley. But it

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was not until last year that Fitzsimmons apparently decided to crush the UFW. Addressing the 1972 convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation in Los Angeles, Fitzsimmons called the UFW "a revolutionary movement which is perpetrating a fraud on the American public," and called for an alliance between agribusiness and the Teamsters. The UFW believes that politics was behind that move. The UFW was an early active supporter of George McGovern; the Farm Bureau and Teamster hierarchies backed President Nixon and have not been unkindly treated in return. (*The New York Times* reported last month that former Attorney General Richard Kleindienst squelched an FBI investigation into possible links between Fitzsimmons and several Mafia figures.)

Early this year the Teamsters sent organizers into the Coachella Valley to collect signatures of farmworkers. They claim to have collected 4158—a figure the UFW says is cockeyed, since there weren't half that many grape workers in the fields. Grami insists all the signatures were valid and voluntary and the result of worker dissatisfaction with the UFW. Whatever the truth of the matter, the Teamsters took their petitions to the growers and after less than two days of negotiations signed four-year contracts that brought back the old labor contracting system. There have been no meetings between Teamsters leaders and farmworkers, no ranch committees established similar to the UFW's, no ratification process offered. When asked by a newsman whether farmworkers ought to vote for the union of their choice, Fitzsimmons replied: "Why should we have an election if we already have the contracts?"

The UFW wants to reform the basic nature of large-scale agriculture; protect its members against pesticides and mechanization; build a political force for Chicano and Filipino farmworkers that can offset the political power of agribusiness; and nurture a sense of solidarity and self-respect among the poorest of American workers. It is a social and political movement as well as a trade union, but its future depends on whether it can survive as a union. At the moment that future is bleak. It must regain the contracts lost to the Teamsters in table grapes as well as lettuce. It can do this only by demonstrating to growers that it's too costly for them to deal with the Teamsters. That means more strikes and another grape boycott, the success of which will depend to a large extent on AFL-CIO, church and liberal support. George Meany, who in the past has made no secret of his dislike for Chavez' style and politics, has condemned the Teamsters raids as "disgraceful" and dispatched 20 top organizers to Coachella; the AFL-CIO executive council last week voted to give UFW a strike fund of $1.6 million.

The UFW's strongest asset is its urban image and boycott apparatus. Chavez has called a new boycott on non-UFW grapes; the effect won't be known until the first grapes go to market in June. As in the past the UFW's major targets will be the Safeway and A&P chains. Growers are counting on the Teamsters union label, and possibly the Teamsters' ability to slow or stop deliveries to markets that don't handle grapes, to make the second grape boycott less damaging than the first. They're also hoping to get federal legislation, with Nixon administration backing, that would outlaw the secondary boycott.

Chavez is realistic about the UFW's position. "What we accomplished in eight years of organizing is all being wiped out with one stroke of the pen." But, he insists, "we'll break them. Don't ask me how long it will take. Five years, 10 years. We're very patient."

Peter Barnes

The Nixon Watch

Living With Henry

Henry Kissinger's return from his latest journey to Moscow was awaited by his staff with an interest that had nothing to do with the delay in arranging a firm date for Leonid Brezhnev's promised visit to Washington. The 132 people who comprise Kissinger's National Security Council establishment assumed that he would soon get around to telling them what some changes in the NSC staff structure that were announced last April 6 and decided upon well before then are going to mean to them and to their relationship with him and the President.

The patient acceptance of Kissinger's failure to tell even the senior members of his staff, including those who are directly affected, what he had in mind with the changes before or when they were announced, is a good indicator of how it is to work and live with Henry in the fifth year of that extraordinary experience. Sadly for reporters and commentators who in the past have made much of the horrors of working for Henry Kissinger, the horror stories are no longer told with horror. His secretive ways, his relentless demands for unattainable perfection, his occasional flashes of cutting anger have come to be taken for granted and dismissed with rather humorous pleas for understanding that it's Henry being Henry and doesn't really matter. Most of his 50 professional assistants are trained specialists with trained minds—career diplomats, economists, systems analysts, political scientists, a few lawyers and generalists. The plain fact, corny when baldly stated but nonetheless a fact, is that they perceive in Kissinger the possessor of a superlative mind who stretches their minds and capabilities to the utmost and, along with the pains and passing resentments, gives them a profound sense of satisfaction and reward when he does it.

The changes in staff structure reflect Kissinger's

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evolution in the job since he became Mr. Nixon's assistant for national security affairs in 1969. It took him 18 months to come around to acceptance of one subordinate with the title and status of deputy assistant to the President. Now he is to have four subordinates with that title and a fifth with the status but not the title. Kissinger's mix of reasons for such a generous expansion of a rank that confers upon the holders, in theory though not necessarily in fact, the prestige of responsibility to the President rather than to him provides an interesting insight into his evolving view of his job and of the NSC function.

The reason of greatest general interest, though not the most immediate and important reason to be stated in forthcoming explanations to the staff, is that Kissinger is preparing the NSC structure for his departure. He is aware that his associates are basing their own plans on the assumption that he will be around for two years and probably no more than two years of the second Nixon term. He neither questions nor discourages the assumption. But his present intention could change for one or more of several reasons. The President could lose confidence in him; he could lose confidence in the President; or an impossible situation for him could be created by the replacement of the docile and cooperative William P. Rogers with a secretary of State, John Connally for instance, who would not tolerate Kissinger's ascendancy in the formulation and execution of foreign policy. One thing that certainly will not happen, I am assured and believe, is Kissinger's departure because of the Watergate scandal and the imputations of involvement that now crowd upon the President. The consensus around Kissinger is that, all other considerations apart, he will not desert the President at a time when his departure would be interpreted as a show of distrust. If it ever comes to a matter of non-confidence on either man's part, it will be over issues of policy principle and that is extremely improbable. Eventual departure is a factor in the structural changes only in the sense that Kissinger wants to leave behind him, when and if he goes, an NSC system and NSC procedures that are not as dependent upon him as they have been and that a successor can operate with until he rearranges the setup to suit himself.

Kissinger's principal purpose, as it will be explained to the staff, is to make it easier to work with him and for him to work with his assistants. As I get the story, he realized many months ago that he had become a bottleneck in the system and that the single deputy assistant, originally General Alexander M. Haig, Jr. and now Brigadier General Brent Scowcroft, had become another bottleneck. In the intensely personalized procedure that Kissinger started with in 1969 and has dominated since then, policy business that he didn't have the time to handle was supposed to be handled by the deputy and neither of them had enough time to do it. This became acutely obvious at the height of the negotiations for an Indochina and Vietnam settlement last year, when both Kissinger and General Haig were frequently abroad, and Kissinger finally brought himself to do something about it with the designation of a "deputy for operations." His choice for the job is Lawrence S. Eagleburger, aged 43, a career foreign service officer who worked himself into physical breakdown as a personal assistant to Kissinger in 1969 and lately has been acting assistant secretary of Defense for international security affairs. Kissinger's theory is that a few hours a week with Eagleburger, imparting to him Kissinger's and the President's views and wishes, will qualify the new deputy to act for Kissinger on marginal matters and serve as a buffer between him and senior members of the staff. The hope is that this will allow Kissinger ample time, more time than he has had in the past, for personal discussion with his senior associates and their juniors on critical matters. Such is the theory. One of Kissinger's oldest and most loyal associates advised me to assume that the theory won't work out. Henry's insistence upon personal and minute supervision of everything that concerns him and the President will never change, this fellow said, adding that the demands of the staff for personal contact with Henry will never change, either.

The two other new deputies (for "planning" and for international economic affairs) are to be Colonel Richard T. Kennedy, a retired army officer who since 1969 has been the staff planning director, and Charles A. Cooper, a former Rand Corporation economist who since 1970 has been the chief economics officer at the US Embassy in Saigon. The "planning" in Colonel Kennedy's old and new titles is something of a euphemism. A quiet man with a passion for orderly labor, he keeps the otherwise frantic NSC pace and procedure in a condition bearably short of chaos and, in simple justice, had to be accorded the higher title and status if anybody was. Charles Cooper, an eminent economist in his own right, gets the rank because he probably couldn't have been recruited without it. His advent signals Kissinger's determination to have the NSC staff play a larger and more effective role in international economic policy than it previously has. Philip Odeen, the NSC staff's chief systems analyst, gets the status without the title for one of those curious reasons that often operate in officialdom. His opposite number at the Department of Defense was recently downgraded, and Kissinger figured that he couldn't formally upgrade Odeen without offending the powers at DOD.

A victim and beneficiary of the same sort of official quirkery is Helmut Sonnenfeldt, who since 1969 has been Kissinger's senior specialist on Soviet and East European affairs. Sonnenfeldt, a foreign service officer, is credited with immense contributions to the President's Moscow summit, strategic arms negotiations, the whole range of widening accommodation with the Soviet Union. By acknowledged right, he should have

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been designated Kissinger's senior deputy. But—and here I repeat what I'm told—many of Hal Sonnenfeldt's associates find him impossibly difficult to work for. Kissinger concluded that he would have a staff revolt and unmanageable chaos on his hands if he gave Sonnenfeldt the promotion he had earned. The department of State didn't want him back. Elliot Richardson, who thought he was staying at the Defense Department and instead has been named attorney general in the forlorn hope that he can clear up and sanitize the Watergate scandal, rejected Kissinger's urgent recommendation that Sonnenfeldt be appointed assistant secretary for international security affairs. Ostensibly Richardson refused on the mentioned personality grounds. Actually, as Richardson saw it, the issue was whether the White House should or shouldn't dictate DOD appointments. So Kissinger worked the problem out with Treasury Secretary George Shultz and Hal Sonnenfeldt is to be an under secretary of the Treasury, specializing in international economic affairs. He's happy and Kissinger is happy.

This is one of the few occasions for happiness at the beleaguered White House. Another one, in NSC quarters, is the fact that General Haig has temporarily replaced H. R. Haldeman as Mr. Nixon's chief of staff. Haldeman detested Kissinger and Kissinger detested Haldeman. Grave and growing concern that Watergate is eroding the President's authority abroad as well as at home outweighs all other considerations in Henry Kissinger's vicinity. But one hears it said in that vicinity, though not by Kissinger, that if any good could come of Watergate it was the removal of Bob Haldeman and his California crowd from power at the White House.

John Osborne

A Talk with Sihanouk

Count Him In

by Stanley Karnow

Peking

When Prince Norodom Sihanouk was overthrown as Cambodian chief of state three years ago, it was generally assumed that he would soon join the assortment of deposed monarchs who live out their lives on the French Riviera. But Sihanouk has proved to be a different species. He has managed to win the backing of the Chinese, who were intially doubtful about his future, and he has also gained the support of the North Vietnamese, whom he has long distrusted. He recently undertook a dangerous trip into the so-called "liberated areas" of Cambodia in order to reinforce his alliance with the insurgents fighting against the tottering Pnompenh regime headed by Lon Nol and, at the same time, to demonstrate that he represents something more significant than a government in exile. Most important perhaps, Sihanouk has succeeded in acquiring a measure of begrudging recognition from the Nixon administration. In contrast to a few months ago when they dismissed him as "all washed up," administration officials now concede that Sihanouk will probably play some kind of role in a future Cambodian settlement.

So the "Pink Prince," as he laughingly calls himself, cannot be counted out of the Cambodian equation. On the contrary he may well hold the key to a solution of the war—even if his part in achieving a cease-fire is only temporary.

When I talked with Sihanouk here in Peking last week, he displayed his characteristic ebullience and an extraordinary degree of self-confidence. He and his entourage occupy the former French embassy, a compound of drab buildings located on what was formerly called Legation Street and is now known as Anti-imperialist Street. We sat in a salon decorated with a huge photograph of Sihanouk and Mao Tse-tung and such *objets d'art* as soapstone carvings and embroidery landscapes. I began by asking Sihanouk why he chose after his ouster to continue fighting rather than retire comfortably to France. He replied with an anecdote: "A month before the coup against me I was in southern France, in Nice, strolling along the Promenade des Anglais, and some French mistook me for Bao Dai, the former emperor of Vietnam. 'He is so fat and his pockets are filled with money, our money,' I heard them say. I turned to them and said that I was not Bao Dai. I serve my country and I do not depend on the French people, I told them. So you see, my temperament is different from that of other kings

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who have been deposed. It is my duty to fight."

Sihanouk then went on to explain the purpose of his recent trip back to Cambodia. His enemies alleged that he was in exile in Peking and had no connection with the internal resistance forces, he said. Moreover, he added, his foes contended that the insurgents did not consider him their leader. These charges were not entirely unfounded, since Sihanouk himself had disclosed as recently as January that he might not be welcomed by the insurgents. But some kind of understanding was reached and, as he put it last week, "I proved to the world and to my enemies that the national resistance inside Cambodia regards Sihanouk as the only legal head of state . . . and the father of the Cambodian patriots." In addition, he insisted, the leftist insurgents known as Khmers Rouges are "legitimists" who are loyal to his royal government. In other words, Sihanouk argues, his government exists inside Cambodia as an alternative establishment to the Lon Nol regime—very much the way the Vietcong's provisional revolutionary government challenges the legality of the Saigon administration. Sihanouk asserts, incidentally, that the term Khmer Rouge is ideologically ambiguous. He says: "They are leftists but they refused to be considered Communists. They are Buddhists, they are very Cambodian and they are very independent-minded. They are not puppets of China, not puppets of Russia, not puppets of Hanoi . . . Their program is progressive, leftist, but it suits royalists, nationalists, and Buddhists—and it suits me too."

I reminded Sihanouk that in October 1967, when he was in power in Pnompenh, he had accused the present insurgent leaders of treason and ordered them to be tried by a military court. It was assumed at the time that they were secretly executed. Sihanouk now claims rather lamely that he was tricked into cracking down on the leftists by Lon Nol. But he denies that they are dead, pointing out that he saw and filmed them during his recent journey to Cambodia. "I could not have invented them," he says, "I mean, they are really alive."

Sihanouk seems to me to be on somewhat shaky ground when he contends, as he did, that the Central Intelligence Agency was involved in the coup against him. He cites newspaper reports as evidence for the charge. He also revealed to me that Chinese Premier Chou En-lai told President Nixon during their meeting here last year that "the coup d'état was your coup, an American coup." According to Sihanouk, Nixon replied that the coup was staged strictly by Lon Nol and "not even the CIA was involved." Sihanouk remains unconvinced. "If what President Nixon said is true," he argued, "why did he invade Cambodia at the end of April in order to defend Lon Nol? Since then he has done his best to help Lon Nol to survive. That is the proof that he was involved." Looking back on that period it is interesting to speculate on whether the domestic Cambodian tangle might have been unraveled if Nixon had not invaded the country. Sihanouk rules out that possibility. "I would not have compromised with the traitors because they were my ministers and officers, and they betrayed me during my absence from Cambodia. Nor will we compromise with Pnompenh in the future. We do not plan to negotiate with anybody in Pnompenh. We plan to liberate the city and to establish the royal government there."

Sihanouk is willing to open discussions with the United States, however, but told me that his offers to talk with Henry Kissinger, made through Chou En-lai and North Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong, were rejected last year and again this February. Sihanouk said that Kissinger told the two intermediaries that he was "not permitted by President Nixon" to deal with the prince.

It may hearten the Pentagon to know that Sihanouk confesses quite candidly that American bombing affects his forces "very significantly." He told me that the air strikes by B-52s and F-111s are "the main factor, the main reason why we cannot take Pnompenh." He also admitted that the US bombings and strafings are effective in preventing his followers from blocking the Mekong River, along which supplies are moved to Pnompenh. But he contends that the American aircraft cannot defeat his forces, even if his forces cannot defeat the Lon Nol regime as long as it has US air support. "So the war may continue for some time to come," he says. How long? "Well, at least until President Nixon retires from office in 1976."

In contrast to his Chinese hosts, who are reticent to comment on Watergate as they improve their relations with the administration, Sihanouk is delighted by the scandal. "I must confess that it pleases me," he said, "because it may cause President Nixon so much trouble that he will not be able to continue the war against us. I hope so."

The Pentagon may also be heartened by Sihanouk's admission that the North Vietnamese and Vietcong use Cambodia as a route to transport equipment down to South Vietnam. "We allow them this because they are allies," he said, but he denies that the Communists have "fixed permanent bases" inside Cambodia. He admits as well that Hanoi provided his forces with advisers and instructors in 1970 and 1971. He denies, however, that North Vietnamese troops are now fighting alongside his insurgents. "If they were, we would have beaten Lon Nol a long time ago," he said.

Sihanouk does not attempt to deny that he relies on North Vietnamese and Chinese military aid. The Chinese aid, which he claims is sufficient to equip an army of 100,000 men, is moved down the Ho Chi Minh trail by North Vietnamese "because we fight the same enemy." He says that his forces also have captured weapons, among them 100 five-millimeter howitzers, from the government army. I can add from recent ex-

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perience in Pnompenh, incidentally, that Lon Nol's officers sell guns and other hardware to their enemy. The going price for an M-16 rifle is about $20.

During his days of power and glory in Pnompenh, Sihanouk frequently voiced the fear that the North Vietnamese aimed to swallow up Cambodia and that his only hope lay in China's desire for a fragmented Indochina that eluded Hanoi's control. Although he carefully avoids such speculation, I suspect that he believes his best defense to be a close relationship with Peking. That the Chinese also believe that Sihanouk and his supporters will contribute to the Balkanized Indochina they prefer was evident one day last week as the prince departed for a tour of Africa and Eastern Europe. Except for Mao, the entire Chinese leadership went to the airport to bid him farewell. Needless to say, Sihanouk's reliance on Peking has infuriated the Kremlin. And the prince pulls no punches when he speaks of the Russians: "Soviet policy is to be with the man in power in the capital. Not in the jungle. When I was in power in Pnompenh, they supported me and said that the leftists in the jungle were mad. Now that I am with the men in the jungle, they support Lon Nol and say that I am mad."

If his forces win, Sihanouk says, he will only return to Pnompenh temporarily. His dream, he explains, is to live amid the magnificent temples of Angkor as a figurehead chief of state, dabbling perhaps in international affairs as an ambassador at-large. He claims that he has already transferred his responsibilities for the management of the government to the resistance forces.

One of the strange and tragic ironies in all this is that, on the eve of his downfall three years ago, Sihanouk was expressing alarm that the United States might withdraw from Southeast Asia. I recalled to him that he had written at the time that the United States should "uphold popular nationalisms in their fight against the new imperialism: Asiatic communism." His prescription was American military, economic and social aid designed to meet the peril of what he called "yellow" communism. Sihanouk conceded in response to the provocative question that he had been wrong.

For one thing, he said, he was wrong to have believed that the United States wanted to safeguard the neutrality of countries like Cambodia. He was equally wrong, Sihanouk said, to have written about Asian communism. Communism is not a monolith. Moreover, he went on, how can communism be a danger when President Nixon chooses to be on the friendliest terms with Moscow and Peking? "It is even more ridiculous for Mr. Nixon to fear that Cambodian communism will threaten the United States," Sihanouk continued. And, almost proudly, he added: "Really, he does us too much honor."

After the US Withdrawal

Vietnam without GIs

by Zalin B. Grant

Saigon

When I asked the Vietnamese chief of Tay Ninh province if he was sorry to see the last Americans leave, he giggled, took a swig of his beer-over-ice, and replied, "That's a hard question." Less circumspect was the hotel waitress in Hué who quietly watched the evening sun flame out over the Perfume River before answering: "Everyone is happy to see the Americans go. But we also know the Americans were happy to leave."

The South Vietnamese viewed the American departure not without bitterness, for it left Viet Cong officials in pith helmets camped on the outskirts of Saigon, large chunks of the country under North Vietnamese control, and a cease-fire that continues to bring death to thousands. But they were very tired of the overwhelming American presence, and those to whom I have talked were glad finally to be rid of us.

A wire service reporter, trying hard to pull together a colorful wrap-up of the US departure, wrote that

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ZALIN B. GRANT, *who recently completed a tour of Indochina, first went to Vietnam in 1964 as an intelligence officer and later served as Southeast Asia correspondent of this journal. He speaks Vietnamese.*

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Saigon was turned temporarily into a ghost town. One suspects he was writing from an imagination of what the final days should have been like after all the years of blood. Nothing was further from the truth. As the end was signaled by several media-designed ceremonies, where flags were furled and poignant claims of peace with honor made, the Saigonese went about their business without even a glance over their shoulders.

There can be no question that Saigon and the country are the better for our leave-taking. The pimps, whores and black marketeers have suffered a serious demotion in the social register from the prominence they enjoyed during the American heyday. Marijuana and heroin undoubtedly are still around, but best evidence of the new scarcity lies with the fact that during the two months I was in Vietnam after our departure nobody solicited me to buy either on the streets—a different story from my last trip in 1970.

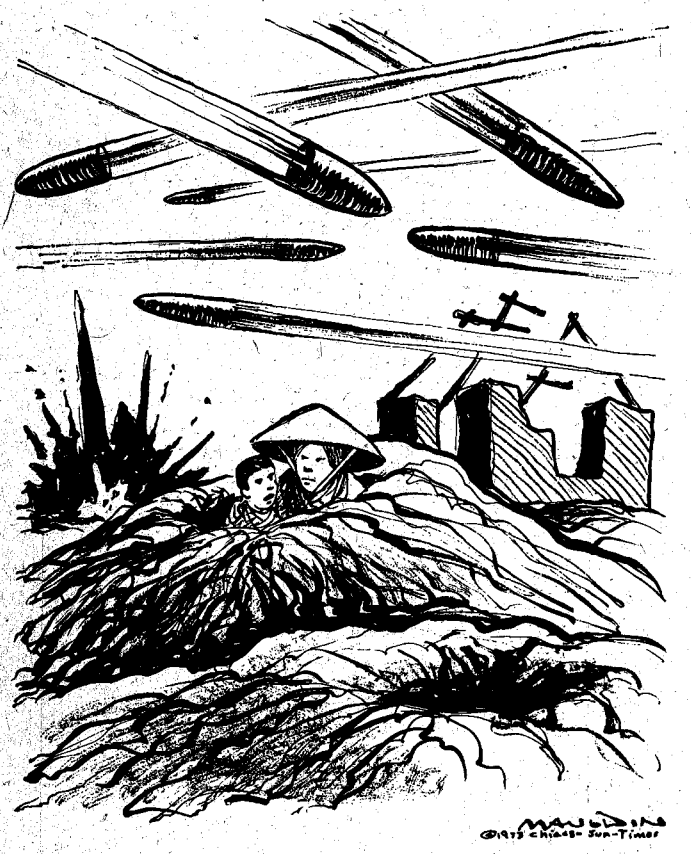
To walk down Tu Do Street in the evening is to thread one's way through an obstacle course of bold sidewalk ladies. The hard-core have collected here in the quarter near the hotels that house foreign technicians, salesmen and journalists. One of the newer hotels, the Miramar, casually puts the cost of a girl on the room tab. And the terrace of the old Continental Hotel, once a place to have a quiet drink and ponder the perception of Graham Greene, has been overrun by unemployed bar-girls and beggars with amputated limbs or worse. Some of the bar-girls like Miss Tam can never go home again. A bright and witty farm girl from the Delta, she estimates that she slept with 5000 different Americans during the war. Her career was mostly spent working the US rest and recreation center at the seacoast resort of Vung Tau. Miss Tam's problem is that one of the Americans left his name—Johnson—tattooed in large blue letters across her left breast.

Still the situation in Vietnam is not to be judged by Saigon's Tu Do Street or Miss Tam's tattoo. Bars, massage parlors, restaurants, laundry and car-wash concessions have closed throughout the country, and almost all the signs written in English have come down. No one aware of the resiliency of the Vietnamese will find it surprising that most of the bar-girls have begun to return to their native villages or have sought more discreet jobs in the cities.

The former American camps that dot Vietnam are beginning to crumble. Long Binh outside of Saigon, once the largest US military base in the world, does look like a ghost town. The camps built by the Americans were starkly temporary, usually unpainted wood and tin barracks, but the GIs kept the billets spruce and trim, built outdoor barbeque patios, and in some cases grew flowers. The Vietnamese pay little heed to such niceties. In many areas weeds are crowding emplacements and sandbags are rotting. Scavengers have begun to dismantle unused buildings in order to sell the tin roofing and the wood. What promises to be the lasting American monument is the thousands of miles of rusting barbed wire strung over the country.

Statistics of the bomb tonnages dropped on Vietnam, usually given in terms of x-number-of-times-more-than-World War II, may have left the impression that South Vietnam is one large piece of moonscape. One cannot minimize the death and destruction the US caused, but the picture of a country laid to waste is a distortion. Most of the bombs were dropped on unpopulated jungled areas, and sawmill owners have found it wise to scan logs with metal detection devices before putting them to the blade. There are slices of the country whose contours have been changed by cratering, if not permanently at least for the next few generations. But Vietnam remains a lush green country of great beauty. The tropical foliage is inexorable, and defoliated zones have begun to grow over.

The most dramatic signs of the war are to be found in those places that took the brunt of the 1972 Easter offensive, such as An Loc and Quang Tri. I recently made a drive from Danang to Quang Tri. The country's boundaries have been altered. For all practical purposes everything north of Quang Tri belongs to the North Vietnamese. South Vietnamese airborne and marines have turned the destroyed city and the Verdun-like surrounding area into a military zone where no civilians are allowed. Just several miles to



"Gee, Mama—what was it like before the cease-fire?"

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the rear, however, life goes on normally with farmers tending fields of chest-high rice.

South Vietnam, for all its problems, is not Vietnam of 10 years ago or five years ago or even last year. The government—that is Nguyen Van Thieu, his young American-educated nephew and chief assistant, Hoang Duc Nha, and Premier Tran Van Khiem—is stronger than ever. Thieu has turned out to be the Richard Nixon of Asia. Nobody seems to like him and many say he must go. But no one is betting he will. There are several reasons for his success more subtle than those usually listed, which are unrelated to Thieu himself.

The most important has to do with the general mobilization of the country from 1968 onward, which has touched in one way or another about every family in Vietnam. There is a new level of younger officers, majors and captains and lieutenant colonels, who are bright and relatively efficient. They have no love for Thieu, but they do have a stake in maintaining the status quo. Moreover the tens of thousands of farm boys who have been churned through the military machine have perhaps become no more pro-government, but they have definitely become more anti-Viet Cong. It is immensely easy to dislike someone who is trying to kill you.

A crucial factor too is the population shift from the countryside to the cities. At the war's start Vietnam was 80 percent rural. The fighting and bombing drove the farmers to safety in the cities, and now Vietnam is about 50 percent urban. Furthermore the spread of the Honda motorcycle has carried urban attitudes to the countryside. The result is a more sophisticated citizenry, many with television sets, who aren't as susceptible as they once were to the agit-propaganda techniques of the Communists.

It's impossible to assess accurately the Viet Cong's strength. They are no longer foolish enough to fly their flags over their villages as they did shortly after the cease-fire—at least not in sight of Thieu's air and artillery officers. The VC organization remains strong but their ranks have been depleted; one good man is trying to do the job four or five did a few years ago. And if the VC are the possessors of the true nationalistic flame, they haven't communicated this fact very well to the people in recent years with their indiscriminate use of terror and shelling. Even without Thieu and his strong-arm tactics the country hardly would rush to the Viet Cong.

Thieu's problem lies not so much with the Viet Cong as with inflation and the North Vietnamese. The key point of the US pacification program was not pacification at all, but rather a means of economic stabilization in the face of inflationary strains created by war. The pacification program has largely ended and South Vietnam stands in the middle of a classic inflationary situation, with an oversized army and a non-productive economy. Besides stirring general discontent skyrocketing prices are doubly dangerous to the Thieu regime because underpaid police and government officials may be pushed from their current level of petty corruption into major corruption, which in turn will surely drive the people to the Viet Cong.

As always the North Vietnamese are the great unknown in the equation. South Vietnamese army officers now read maps fairly well and know how to call down artillery fire with some accuracy, which perhaps says not a lot but is certainly more than one could say five years ago. Certain readjustments must be made; the ARVN can't maintain the sophisticated technology left them by the US, even with the help of 6000 American civilian technicians, and things will begin to fall apart somewhat in the coming months. But I believe they will be far from pushovers should the North Vietnamese choose to launch another invasion. More likely Hanoi will use the new buildup to threaten Thieu into political concessions with the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

No one looks at the peace-keeping force with much hope. There's some sympathy for Canada, whose involvement was based either on altruism or misperceptions, or perhaps both, and which is now trying to extricate itself from a mini-quagmire without loss of prestige. Along with the overwhelming problems in making the truce team work, the peace-keepers themselves know practically nothing about the country or the war that simmers on beneath the surface, and are rather like basketball referees suddenly called on to umpire a soccer game.

Thieu's flexibility depends of course on the support he does or does not get from Mr. Nixon. He is likely to remain intransigent as long as he believes Nixon's bombers are behind him, and just how far the administration is prepared to go is unclear. US military headquarters has shifted from Vietnam to Thailand and Honolulu, leaving Saigon's Pentagon East manned by a surrogate called the Defense Attaché Organization. The Central Intelligence Agency has about 130 agents in the country. And there are those old warriors—the former US pacification chief for example—who have invested a number of years in Vietnam and who have their own psychological tattoos which make it difficult for them to go home. They are still puttering around at this late date, talking about broadening the government's base and making the South Vietnamese "viable."

But the haste with which signs of the American presence are disappearing may indicate the South Vietnamese, if not Thieu, are in a mood to forget us. The lasting western influence in Vietnam continues to be French, not American—and the French, who endure a love-hate relationship with their former colonies perfumed by the scent of rubber, are eager to reassert themselves in Indochina. I for one can think of nothing more appropriate.

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Stanley Kauffmann on films

A Journal of the Plague Years
by Stefan Kanfer
(Atheneum; $7.95)

Memories of Underdevelopment
(Tricontinental)

Now we have the second book within a year to deal with the House Un-American Activities Committee and its investigation of communism in show business, particularly in films. Last year Eric Bentley edited *Thirty Years of Treason*, a huge volume extracted from the HUAC transcripts of 1938-68. (Bentley has also adapted an effective documentary play from the transcripts, *Are You Now or Have You Ever Been*, published by Harper Colophon and produced last fall by the Yale Repertory Theater.) Now Stefan Kanfer writes a chronicle of the worst years of show-business blacklisting, 1947 to 1958. Appropriating appropriately from Defoe, he calls his book *A Journal of the Plague Years*.

Bentley explained the emphasis of his edition by saying that HUAC itself showed a theatrical bias and that artists and intellectuals are "more visible" than other men—"open wounds." Kanfer says that, though show business is not separated from its national environment, "it does obey laws and bend to pressures that exist in no other stratum of American life, and I believe that performers and writers are frequently more accurate seismographs of their era than politicians and statesmen." True enough; but surely the point is that these particular politicians were not interested in reading the seismographs accurately, only in exploiting their existence. To put it another way, the Age of Publicity has made show business a pantheon, and politicians go where the pop gods are.

Kanfer, an associate editor of *Time*, has done a good deal of original research, still much of the book will be familiar in substance to anyone who lived through the period or has read about it. Its chief contribution, for those who do or don't remember the era, is that it weaves together all the film-theater-broadcasting elements of HUAC activities into a compact narrative. In relatively short compass, the book presents the obscene play of small men with big clubs versus well-known men in vulnerable positions, of brassbound patriotism versus undefinable and often woolly minded humanitarianism, that resulted in a decade of damage.

In his balance of materials, Kanfer is generally judicious. His historical context is weak (for this, one must read Walter Goodman's *The Committee*); but he makes clear the difference between HUAC and Joe McCarthy (the committee existed before Joe and continued after his censure); he deals with many of the lesser-known figures, as well as such "stars" as the Hollywood Ten; and he is careful to describe the "hypocrisy, self-deceit, factionalism" that could be charged against the show-business left. (He quotes Lillian Hellman's remark: "There were a few wonderful people. But most of them struck me as utter damn fools.")

I wish I could say that it's hard to believe today—but it's easy—that a supermarket tycoon in Syracuse, NY could influence the hiring and firing of actors and directors and writers; that major film studios were appealing to quite unofficial private "clearance" agencies for permission to employ various people; that CBS, while presenting Edward R. Murrow as a voice against McCarthy, was demanding loyalty oaths from its employees. But in a huge, heterogeneous, politically naive democracy, fear and ignorance are always ready, waiting for the right moment to be used by the unscrupulous. (If you think I'm maligning the sincerity of the committee, read my reports on the HUAC film *Operation Abolition*, *TNR*, March 27, '61 and Feb. 12, '62.)

All good material, all opportunely presented. What a pity, then, that this is not a good book. It's written in such a hyped-up, sweatily figurative, professionally frenetic style that the worth of the subject is continually derogated by the cheapness of the presentation. It all reads like one immense story from *Time*—when it doesn't read like a parody of *Time*. Examples:

Dime-store Drama. The opening line (which is repeated at the very end): "Farce is tragedy out for a good time." I remembered that Otis Ferguson once called *Time*-style "oracular baby-talk." *Spurious Subjectivity.* Philip Loeb, a harassed actor, commits suicide in a hotel room. When he swallows the capsules: "the water tasted of chlorine." Fourteen chapters later, a rightist harasser commits suicide in a motel room. When he swallows *his* capsules: "the water tasted of chlorine." The phoniness of the novelistic intrusion at these points is un-

(continued on page 32)

Films Worth Seeing

Cabaret. Slick musical, remotely connected with Isherwood's *Berlin Stories.* Michael York better than Liza Minnelli, which is one of the things wrong with the film. But Bob Fosse directs smartly.

The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie. Luis Buñuel, seventy-something and something to marvel at, plays slyly with middle-class corruption.

The Emigrants. Jan Troell photographed and directed, Max von Sydow and Liv Ullmann perform, one of the best chronicle films—about 19th-century Swedes coming to the US.

Jeremiah Johnson. Robert Redford as a Rocky Mountain trapper 130 years ago. Space, rigor, life-style.

Love. Lili Darvas is exquisite as a 96-year-old in this delicate, nearly perfect Hungarian film about the effect on one family of a police state and some things it can't affect.

Payday. The last 36 hours in the life of a country-music star, played pungently by Rip Torn. Pleasantly different from some recent pretentiousness, it's more serious than it seems.

State of Siege. Fictional re-creation of the Tupamaro abduction and murder of an American official in Uruguay, 1970. Questionably objective, but generally gripping.

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David Littlejohn on art

Kramer's Essays

This is a collection of 114 short essays, mostly on 19th- and 20th-century painting and sculpture, written over the last 17 years by the man who is now art news editor of *The New York Times*. His subjects range from Turner and Courbet to the more written-about styles of 1972, and he divides his space about equally between living and dead artists. With three or four exceptions, the essays are shaped to a standard reviewer's format (about 1500 words) and almost every one takes for its pretext some current exhibition or new book. But very few of them are what could be called standard reviews. Mr. Kramer has so many more important things to say about art that the passing events that provide him with his subjects rarely get more than a mention.

The Age of the Avant-Garde
by Hilton Kramer
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $12.95)

Hilton Kramer has a profound and thoughtful respect for the modernist tradition, and for artists and critics who respect it as much as he does. He puts cubism and the School of Paris at the heart of the modernist tradition. He regards Picasso as its greatest inventive genius, and Matisse as its greatest painter. Earlier artists he discusses primarily in terms of their relevance to 20th-century art, or contemporary taste, but he seems to hold pretty well to the established rankings of established masters. He is displeased by the recent sympathetic revival of Victorian and *fin de siècle* art, which he regards as decadent or worse. He makes a strong case in defense of the German expressionists, whom he believes to be unduly out of favor. Max Beckmann is one of his special heroes; so, in the domain of abstract art, is Mondrian. He writes a good deal about sculpture, and is very keen on the work of David Smith. Juan Gris, he thinks, is overrated, Jacob Epstein a vulgar second rater, the later Chagall (and much of the later Picasso) dismally unedifying. The ideas and heroes of futurism and Dada are self-defeating aberrations in the history of modern art. Charles Sheeler is a slick sentimentalist. Andrew Wyeth and Salvador Dali are beneath contempt.

Much of his writing on American art is an attempt to impress on the public attention the values of neglected artists, past and present—independent traditionalists, for the most part, men and women working in styles distinctly alien to those currently held in highest critical regard.

Although there are well-known contemporary artists he admires (Helen Frankenthaler, Mark di Suvero, Philip Pearlstein, Claes Oldenberg—with reservations), he is candid in his disrespect for many of the larger postwar reputations. Most of Jackson Pollock's paintings he finds tasteless and cloying, "a decorative simulacrum of painting." Willem de Kooning descended, after 1952, into "an agitated but increasingly empty rhetoric." Jean Dubuffet is a phony, a Parisian dandy playing the primitive. Frank Stella is lightweight, without resonance. George Segal's plaster people in real places are "a vulgar counterfeit" of real art. Ernest Trova's futurist vision is at once meretricious and pathetic. Robert Morris' things are scarcely worth talking about. And Andy Warhol is the Compleat Opportunist, a *Vogue* commercial artist from start to finish, from his pointy-toe shoe ads to his serigraphs of Chairman Mao. His easy, exploitative games, according to Kramer, have helped to debase the taste of an entire generation.

Kramer is unfavorably disposed to abstract expressionism, pop art, optical (or color field, or hard edge geometrical) art, minimalism, conceptual art, neo-Dada, and neo-realism: which is to say, all of the most publicized movements in the New York art world since the war—an interesting position for the art news editor of *The New York Times*. He is also unfavorably disposed to most of the critics, "art bureaucrats," gallery owners, professors and publicists who have supported (and been supported by) these various styles and schools.

This relatively conservative list of likes and dislikes is no barrier to Kramer's usefulness as a critic; but his radical hostility to much of contemporary culture and contemporary taste finds expression in a tone of graceless and egregious insult. Artists whose work he does not like are reviled as mercenaries of bad faith—or else blamed for the sins of their dealers and defenders. Artists whose work he does like are used as sticks to beat the blind bad taste of his professional opponents. In some of the latest essays this hostile wit is deftly integrated into a lucid, shapely and well-detailed case. But too often he's off and swinging away—not at the art under examination, not even at the artist, but at the blindness of his professional adversaries and the debased stupidity of "knuckle-headed spectators." He cannot state a case, either for or against, without railing at the times for not agreeing.

Another objection: each exhibition, each 1500-word article is asked to bear the burden of a rewriting of the history of modern art. His fascination with history and historical connectives can lead to exaggerated claims of influence or significance, and to a ponderous, portentous, cornerstone-laying prose. Even so, I wish Hilton Kramer *would* write a new history of modern art. He has a more obsessive sense of its organic continuity than any other art historian I know.

I wish he would write an *Esthetics*, as well. He insists on the obligation every good critic has to base his judgments on a set of esthetic principles, and his own set—which one can assemble, a bit here, a bit there, from all these fugitive essays—strikes me as humane, enriching, defensible and well thought out. Kramer is seriously ill at ease both with the New York art scene today, and with the limitations and responsibilities of art reviewing. Freed of both these debilitating sources of pressure (by a nice fat bureaucratic grant, say), I think he could offer us both that "rewriting" of modern art history he insists is necessary, and a set of esthetic principles, at once flexible and well rooted, that might help others to make their own way through the neon jungle of contemporary art with something of his own independence and self-assurance.

Notes on Contributors

David Littlejohn's *most recent book is* The Patriotic Traitors (*Doubleday*). Saul Maloff *is the author of the novel* Happy Families (*Scribners*). Richard Poirier *is the author of the critical study,* Norman Mailer (*Viking*). Jonathan Yardley *is book editor of the* Greensboro Daily News. Crawford Woods, *former TV critic for* The Washington Post, *is currently free-lancing from El Prado, NM.*

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Still Room for Badminton

The Great American Novel

by Philip Roth

(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $8.95)

Every good old boy with a sense of history sufficient to distinguish Gehrig from Gehringer, Keeler from Keller, Christy from Christ, Goose from Ducky—any down-home old timer who knows that Johnson will always mean Walter and not Lyndon—what I want to say is that any truly American dude with a memory long enough to recall Coogan's Bluff and Ebbetts Field will, with a catch in his throat, remember the old Ruppert Mundys (playing out of Port Ruppert, New Jersey), once the glory and later the Watergate of the long-defunct Patriot League, back there in the golden age of *three* major leagues. Younger studs (and most women) know no more of either the baseball team or the league it played in than Komsomols do of Trotsky—and for much the same reason: all traces of that turbulent period have been expunged from history by the malevolent forces that determine what we the people shall, and shall not, know.

Small wonder, then, that this pirated edition had first to be published in Peking as a pawn in the great powers' ideological wars. The Soviet Union, hopelessly compromised by its revelations, wouldn't touch it; and with various flimsy evasions and pretexts, American publishers, for all their noble rhetoric about the First Amendment, shied away as from the plague. Near despair, Word Smith, 87, onetime widely syndicated sports columnist ("One Man's Opinion"), waiting for the end in an old-timers' "home" in Valhalla, NY and sternly ordered off alliteration by his doctors, had no other recourse, this hot property in hand, than to appeal directly to Chairman Mao Tse-tung's baser motives—with the present result that the truth has prevailed: the unvarnished edda of the team whose very existence the world denies.

Now we have the record from the hand of the Ishmaelite survivor Word Smith ("Call me Smitty") who traveled with the Mundys through the depths of that fateful season of 1943 when the national "game" came so desperately close to extinction.

Traveled is the operative word, for the traitorous, venal Mundy brothers leased the home park at extortionate rent to the War Department for use as an army post; thereby condemning those heroes forever to wear the penitentiary grey of a visiting club, eternally wandering the desert from ballpark to ballpark, like some modern People of the Book, equally outcast and equally despised; or like a Pequod adrift on mystic waters.

Fans, you may well ask: What the hell is going on around here? *Plots* galore. Who was Gil Gamesh: the greatest southpaw rookie of all time? or was he really Colonel Gilgamesh of the Soviet secret police? We simply don't know; we may never know; the only thing we know for certain is that in his brief glory he was peerless, a left-handed Satchell Paige, Hubbell-Grove-Koufax all in one—and that he was the only begotten son of a Babylonian immigrant father. Was the slugging first baseman, John Baal, really a Comsymp and dupe, as he confessed himself to be before the HUAC, then under the baton of the late Martin Dies—or was he merely a slaphappy drunk with a talent for the long ball and tall tale? What about fleetfooted 14-year-old "Nickname" Damur, the youngest major leaguer in or out of history, weak at bat and in the head but a terror like Ty on the basepaths—was *he* a fellow-traveler or just another gullible pubescent second baseman, one more gumchewing American boy quick on the pivot? What are we to make of the one-legged catcher Hothead Ptah? the catatonic shortstop Frenchy Astarte? the decrepit pitcher Deacon Demeter? Especially what can we finally know of Roland Agni, the greatest rookie slugger of all time, mercilessly cut down in the radiance of his prime by an assassin's bullet? How much did he know when he spiked the team's breakfast of "Jewish Wheaties" and with what rejuvenating elixir? Was Mike the Mouth, his career as an umpire as well as his voicebox both shattered by a Gamesh fastball, seeking crazed vengeance against Gil, or was he a hit man carrying a Beria contract to waste the 19-year-old childe, Roland? How, until the unquiet dead rise to speak again, are we to know? It being the nature of man that he cannot stand too much reality—as a St. Louis cardinal who once jumped the American League for the British once remarked—is it any wonder that the terrible saga of the Mundys should have been suppressed in the national interest? These are only some of the enigmas wrapped in mysteries still surrounding that wartime summer of '43 when America was exterminating rats abroad only to be subverted by others home-grown.

Get the idea, fans? Know what it's all about? Do you at last begin to see what Philip Roth, again hitting them where they ain't, is up to in his latest assault on the national pieties? Wrong again, fans; or half-right, at best. The manic manner (above) may give you some faint inkling of the tonal exuberance it seeks feebly to convey; but these components, even if they were augmented a hundredfold, don't begin to suggest the novel's euphoric inventiveness. If baseball had been invented, not by Abner Doubleday (who, as Smitty is at pains to remind us, did *not* in fact invent it), but by some monstrous computer, housed in Yenan and programmed in Tierra Del Fuego by Corsican cybernetic-icists trained by the diabolical Jewish genius (IQ 424, which just happens to be the batting average of Wee Willie Keeler in his legendary year)—if, that is, Roth had re-invented or re-dreamed the nation's summer rites out of hints gleaned from cuneiform parchments recently unearthed at Cooperstown, New York, the stupefied reader might come closer to the book's lunacies.

Who those readers will be is something of a problem. It must be said with great respect and much sorrow that some gentlemen and most ladies (except those one used to see in the center field bleachers of a Thursday afternoon wearing funny hats and scuffed sneakers) are likely to feel somewhat excluded from the lore, language, ritual and folkways of a special world as it might have been seen by Sy Clops, the one-eyed Jewish ballplayer, now unhappily no more.

Unless, that is, they're interested in linguistics, in which case they'll learn how American is spoken by an enraged immigrant Babylonian in the early throes of night school. They will also learn of the joys and sorrows of the

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lady owner of the Tri-City Tycoons (the vigilant patriot who was the first to sense the Kremlin's determination to bury baseball and thereby destroy America) in her affair of the heart with one of the all-time all-time greats who loved her more than anything in the world—save only for triples. Then for anthropologists there's the horror of the harrowing tale of what happened when Mr. Baseball tried to Westernize African bushmen.

What's the final score? To begin with, it is the novel to end baseball novels (though it leaves the field for squash and badminton wide open); and in doing so spears various wide patches of American demotics. Never mind baseball as the occasion for the great American novel or any other fantasy; and never mind it as a metaphor or symbol for anything. Taking a wacky premise—the terminal afflictions of the "most inept and ludicrous team" in the history of baseball—Roth totally exhausts its comedic possibilities, inventing the game anew as pure slapstick along with the wider American culture which gathers at its shrine. To sustain these conceits with accelerating momentum over the course of a thickish novel is an awesome performance, as rare as pitching a one-hit shutout over 18 innings against a slugging team. If *Our Gang* and *The Breast* were off days or warming-up exercises, *The Great American Novel* is Roth going the distance at the top of his form: a superbly talented performer making the difficult look easy and hardly working up a sweat. When this sheer exhilarating dazzle is applied to a major subject, Roth is as likely as any writer now active to give us—well, *a* great American novel.

Saul Maloff

Opposing the Wonderful, Zany and Powerful

Bright Book of Life: American Novelists and Storytellers from Hemingway to Mailer

by Alfred Kazin

(Little, Brown; $8.95)

There is a kind of critic so frequently in print in so many different places that ubiquity alone earns him the reputation for being commonsensical, free of those oddities of mind and style that make other critics the special taste of people with special interests.. Alfred Kazin, ever since the publication in 1942, when he was 27, of *On Native Grounds*, has been taken for this kind of critic. In collections of reviews and essays (*The Inmost Leaf*, 1955; *Contemporaries*, 1962), and in two autobiographical works (*Walker in the City*, 1951; *Starting Out in the Thirties*, 1965), he has characteristically offered the promise of a steady ride through literary and cultural terrain that is thought to be fog-bound, craggy, wild, even treacherous. It is therefore not surprising that he would choose a title like *Bright Book of Life* to cover a body of literature from Hemingway to the present which is, if bright at all, lit by flashes of stylistic violence, systematic disorder and apocalyptic vision.

It is instructive about the current literary scene to see how someone who might typify Your Accommodated Commonsensical Critic manages to cope, under the predilections of such a title, with the writers of this period. How adequate are his standards, and what are their political, as well as literary, implications?

Because he is anxious to touch everything in fiction, and what he calls art-journalism, since Hemingway—though he skips Gore Vidal, merely alludes to John Barth, and totally ignores such important less-recognized talents as John Hawkes, Rudolph Wurlitzer and Joseph McElroy—Kazin necessarily touches any one of them breezily and with that kind of on-the-run confidence that belongs in the head notes of anthologies for grades 8 through 12. Of the scores of writers discussed, Kazin reserves his firmest votes of confidence for, to mention a sample, Peter Taylor, Carson McCullers, Flannery O'Connor, Vladimir Nabokov, John Cheever, John Updike and James Gould Cozzens. All of these, and Joan Didion, pretty much represent his kind of preference, and they all deserve the praise they get. But what can the acclaim be worth when alongside it are sputtering put-downs of Norman Mailer, Kurt Vonnegut (who deserves some lumps but not those inflicted here) and, with condescending pats, Joseph Heller and William Burroughs?

The reason for this disparity is to be found, I think, in Kazin's temperamental resistance to writing where there is a strong voice, especially a strong masculine voice, asserting itself against authority, against those facts and actualities of contemporary life which Kazin prefers to think of as historically irreversible, something to be put up with. Commonsense fellow that he is, he is of course against the claims of "absurdist" literature—without being aware that Mailer is against them too—and its insistence that society and its accredited systems are more truly forms of chaos than of necessity; he is also against "black humor"; he is also against "self-glorification." It is understandable that anyone might be opposed to these things, and it can be assumed that most people are. But the job of literary criticism is to show how and why any of them result in such lapses of performance as to justify easy dismissals of some of the best writing since 1945.

Surely a clue to Kazin's curiously nervous and fussy reading of the modern and contemporary period is that four of the male writers of whom he is most critical, James Jones, Heller, Mailer and Vonnegut, are all novelists of World War II, and Hemingway, about whom he is both niggardly and obvious, of World War I. It is as if war and war nov-

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els are something Kazin would like to forget, since both bring into question his sedated view of the social process. War is precisely that exercise of politics by other means through which a society or a culture reveals its inward and central "absurdity"; war makes "black humor" into a species of revelation. I suspect that one reason Kazin is conspicuously happier with lady writers, except Katherine Anne Porter who was so beastly to the Germans in *Ship of Fools*, is that war has almost never been their subject, nor indeed have most other manifestations of the organized violence of the state. And Kazin is most comfortable when these manifestations are not the central public facts which have conditioned a novelist's sense of history and of American reality. Not wholly aware of his predilections, he cannot be in control of them, and it becomes necessary to question the ultimate seriousness of a book and of a critic who is continually and rather huffily evoking "history" as a standard without inquiring into some of the reasons for his own partial and cloistered sense of the term.

Obscuring Kazin's view in this book is the irritant smog, drifting across every one of the nine "bright" chapters, from the war in Vietnam and the student protests of the late '60s. Thus he explains Vonnegut's popularity with the young on the ground that he is "absurdist" about the nature of American society and its political agencies, and then, in an effort to make this prejudicially political judgment into a literary one, goes on to claim that "Vonnegut's evasion of realistic description seems typical of the morally outraged, unpolitical, widespread American sense of futility about our government's making war in and on Indo-China for almost a decade." Lest anyone read this as an attempt at "absurdist" or "black humor," be assured that it is of a piece with the whole tenor of the book. Are we to suppose that the moral outrage would have become "political" if there had been more "realistic description"? And if the national "sense of futility" was "unpolitical" could it be said that it was Johnson, rather than Vonnegut, whose capacity for "realistic description" was so faulty that he decided to withdraw from office?

Kazin is not so much confused as he is evasive, as if he feared to clarify the implications of his own position. When he suggests that "realistic description" is a prior condition to political thinking, he really means that both the description and the thinking should accommo-

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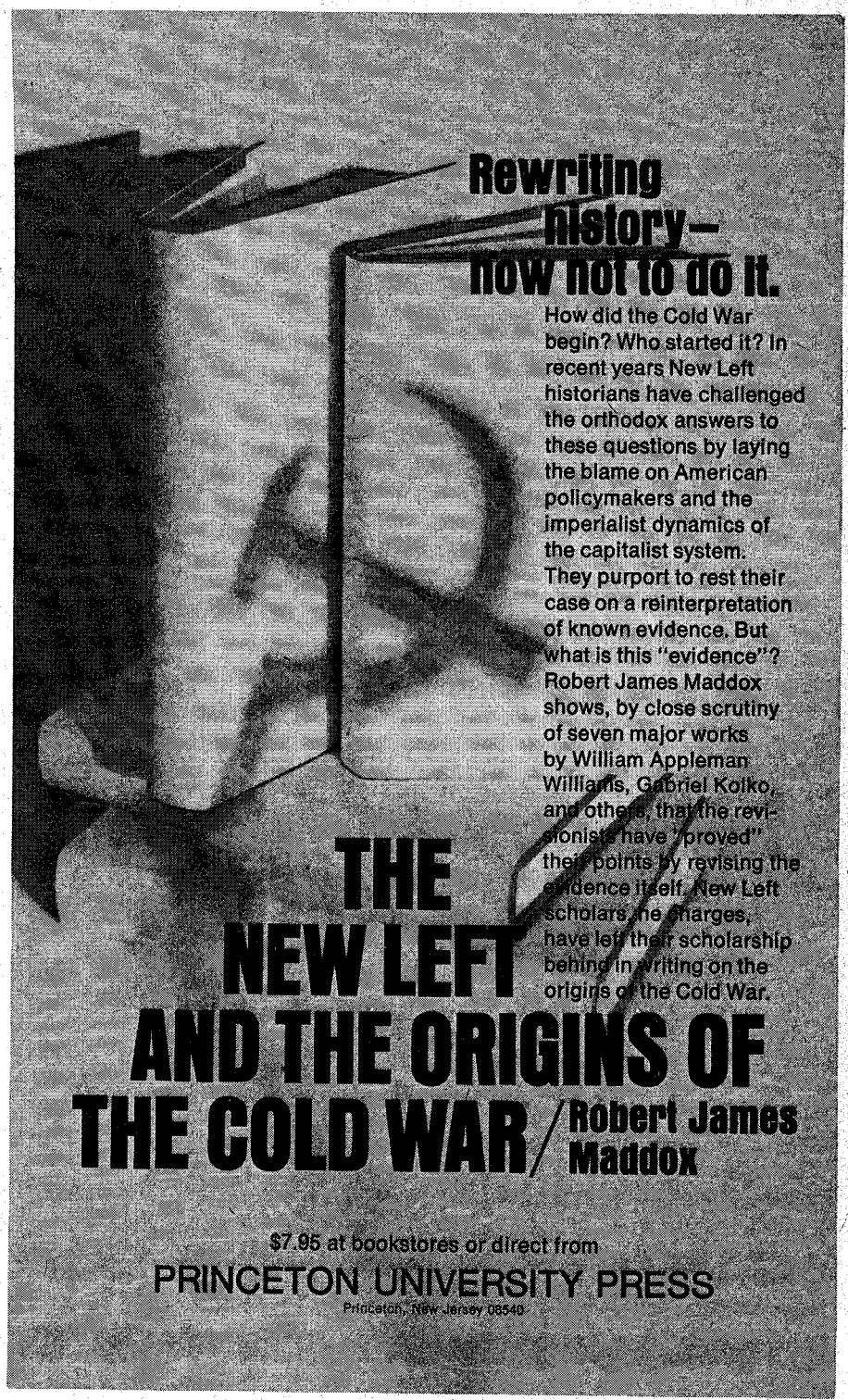
date themselves to reality as it is structured by those who have produced the facts. Not for Kazin any effort to transcend the given world of facts, by "absurdist" humor or other means, in order to ask if the facts are in themselves really the only or the necessary ones. All he allows in that direction must occur in the merely private, local, obsessive patternings which he admires in the works of Nabokov.

Kazin's prejudices, had he taken clear and full possession of them, need not have caused the book's distortions and lack of balance. The cause of these is the placid assumption that his criteria are both natural and self-evident and that they can put him in possession of a writer so essentially alien to them as William Burroughs. Thus Burroughs gets rapped on the knuckles for organizing the public-political world in images that are "purely internal," as if this wasn't conspicuously true of Kazin's own book, relatively true of all writers, and of the organization of things by political systems.

Kazin can deal effectively only with writers whose style intensifies the constituted world without distorting it unduly, just as in his own writing he proposes not to disturb the reader with anything but a firm yet relaxed hand on a magical mystery tour that will leave everyone patiently gazing at the "bright book of life." Quite determined that the nature of the material he must show us will not modify his sense of what it *ought* to be, he is committed to an urbanity of tone, giving way now and then to confident arias, which lead him into a number of gaffes when something more than urbanity and easy confidence are required. He is best on minor figures because he doesn't have to account for the complicated literary and historical pressures needed to explain them. But while he's not really good with the bigger boys, except Nabokov, whom he pacifies beyond recognition, he does at least drop hints here and there that some literary and intellectual relationships need to be evoked if these writers are to be discussed at all.

At these points one has a glimpse of why it is indeed impossible to confront the literature of this century while at the same time posing as an easily competent, commonsensical reviewer. Certain literary matters require a kind of fineness of discrimination which a bromidic style like Kazin's simply can't aspire to, and in the absence of it one gets not clarity but obfuscation as bad in its own way as any contrived by a Francophile fabulator. Thus, while it may be necessary to drop the name of Wilhelm Reich in a discussion of Mailer, the value of doing so is lost by claiming, with gross and misleading casualness about Reich's political and economic thinking, that the author of *The Function of the Orgasm* believed in "sexual openness as the key to self-liberation in everything." But if Kazin's attributions when he wishes to blame are inaccurate, so are his attributions when he wishes to praise. Because he wants to praise Faulkner, he credits him with "unselfconscious originality of technique," which may be a nice thing to have said about you but which is wholly wrong when applied to a novelist who from the beginning was steeped in literary imitations of the most advanced models. And because Kazin detests the so-called New Critics, he reaches in his bag for a Kazin stinger—any one will do—and accuses them of believing in "literature-as-religion," an allegation which no intelligent reading of the central texts going back to Eliot on Arnold and Pater will support. To speak further of Eliot as having a "per-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THE NEW LEFT AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR / Robert James Maddox
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fect respect for tradition" should perplex even those who know only the title "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and think on what it implies.

Rather than get into any complicated byways on his tour through the "bright book" Kazin simply picks up speed past the important turns, so that "this sense of society as *totally* against us is something new in fiction," except that it isn't, not to anyone who understands, among many other American works of the last century, Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivner." Similarly, anyone who remembers Laura in Katherine Anne Porter's "Flowering Judas" or the heroine of the much later and masterful story "Holiday" will wonder what author Kazin is talking about when he asserts that in Miss Porter's work "woman becomes a work of art in a world stupid with violence," a claim preceded by one that is equally incorrect, proposing that when James in the Prefaces referred to "life at its stupid work" he was alluding to the conflict between life and women. In fact he was talking about how too many details about an actual occurrence could destroy the shape he wanted to give it in a story.

The list could be extended, especially to include any number of confusions having to do with Mailer, the sequence of his work, and his talk about doing his "big" novel. But in this as in many other cases the obscurity of Kazin's writing when he's trying to deal with anything major precludes brief illustration of what goes wrong. Ponder, for instance, on the remark apropos of Hemingway and his contemporaries that "tragedy was enough to carry a writer in those days, for in tragedy the self was not destroyed from within." This is at least a wholly original definition of tragedy, as it was equally original on the previous page to claim that for Fitzgerald, (who in fact spent his army time in the camps at home writing the first draft of *This Side of Paradise*), "the First World War was not only a great 'experience'—it was also a school of writing in that most famous of schools for writing—France."

Given the fact that Kazin refuses all sanction to books written for self-glorification and hits out at Hemingway because the late works "were all extraordinarily centered, as usual, around [*sic*], an all absorbing self whose sensations and reflections gave pattern to the story," is it unfair to ask for whom *this* book was patterned and who will be helped by it? Patronizing enough to most of the writers, it is even more patronizing to the reader. In the effort to simplify more than anyone requires, it only misleads; in the effort to sound judicious for the sake of the commonweal (which is quite judicious enough by itself), it becomes prejudicial to most of the wonderful and zany and powerful impulses at work in modern fiction; and in the pretense to political moderation, it twists and turns in fashionable attacks on liberals (though Kazin has always been known as one) and on "absurdist" radicals (while conceding that their view of social reality is probably "natural"). The end result, I'm sorry to say, is a murky and unprofitable book for those wanting an introduction to the subject, and even more murky and unprofitable for those who know anything at all about it.

Richard Poirier

Yen for Power

The Last of the Southern Girls

by Willie Morris

(Knopf; $6.95)

Willie Morris has written a witty, intelligent and engaging book about Washington; doubtless it will set the tongues to wagging at cocktail parties "from Georgetown to the mansion to the Hill, from Chevy Chase to Cleveland Park to McLean," the world in which its heroine moves. *The Last of the Southern Girls* is, however, a novel—a first novel—and as fiction it has its drawbacks: Morris has difficulty weaving expository material into his story, and in a few passages his descriptive prose lapses—surprisingly, and most uncharacteristically for a writer of his skill and taste—into mush.

Still, as entertainment *The Last of the Southern Girls* is fine, and as a Washington *roman à clef* it is great fun. The girl of the title, Carol Hollywell, *née* Templeton, is a ravishing, insouciant, willful native of De Soto Point, Arkansas, who comes to Washington in 1957 fresh out of Ole Miss. In no time she lands a Capitol Hill job, enraptures a corps of notables and demi-notables, makes a wealthy but unhappy marriage, and becomes the darling of Washington society. If one finds in her more than a trace of Barbara Howar, that ravishing, insouciant, willful native of Raleigh, North Carolina, who came to Washington and . . . well, if that is what one finds, no one, least of all Morris, would be surprised.

The novel is populated with plenty of other characters whose real-life counterparts will be identified, or their identities argued over, in Washington gossip. That makes the book both salable and amusing, but in writing a *roman à clef* Morris has taken the risk of distracting attention from the book's more serious purposes: a character study of the girl, and a consideration of "the old urge to authority and power."

Carol Hollywell is a girl of "character . . . and impulsiveness and generosity, and the most curious disguised naiveté and innocence: a woman of the world, true, but beneath that the child who grew up at a time when the quiet streets of a small Southern town were the limits of that world, and all the streets and houses and pathways were where she remembered they belonged." That theme—the conflict between affection for an insular Southern childhood and longing for acceptance in the larger world beyond—is central to Morris' nonfiction, notably his fine autobiography *North Toward Home*, and he deals with it here with sensitivity and compassion. "*God, who am I?*" Carol asks herself. "*God, what do I want?*" If she finds any answer, it is that she is a bundle of painful contradictions, part Arkansas girl with a strong feeling for the past, part Washington operator with a strong yen for power and position.

It is the latter that wins out, as usually it does in Washington. When Carol

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ditches Jack Winter, a young Southern congressman who loves her, it is in large measure because he has lost a race for the Senate: "He had let her down. *He was a loser.*" In Washington, as Morris understands and convincingly conveys in the novel, power comes and power goes; if Jack Winter proves a loser, Carol Hollywell, having become a true Washingtonian, will look elsewhere for a winner.

Morris' feel for Washington—the physical city, its strange small-town flavor, its institutions and monuments, its ever-changing society—is keen if hardly novel. "Washington in the age when American omnipotence had had its day," he writes, ". . . was a large city but not a truly communitied one, being as it was and always had been a kind of national waystation, a least common denominator of a disparate society; it was the capital of a great modern power but the practitioners of that power, as they knew best of all, were impermanent residents, susceptible to the arcane predilections of our people."

Those are observations that the insider Henry Adams probably would have agreed with, and that most Americans now looking at Washington from inside or outside would still agree with; but the passage suggests Morris' chief problem as a novelist: he tends to march out his themes with ruffles and flourishes. Like many other journalists (and I hope he will not be offended at being thus described, for he is one of our best) who have tried their hands at fiction, he too often uses expository rather than fictive methods; he is didactic where he ought to let his themes flow subtly and naturally from the story itself. The result is that the novel moves in fits and starts, its flow broken from time to time by extended passages of exposition.

Interruptive though they are, those passages are at least written with vigor and bite. But what is one to say of this: "She stretched her limbs and watched the play of the moonlight on the green needles of the pines. With the frivolous spirit which had been her bulwark against many things, she dismissed from her drowsy consciousness the past three days, and felt only the promise of bright summer beaches." Or this: "Now the wind was at its peak, and the dog began to howl along with it. They listened as the storm battered in its fullness, then gradually diminished, as if victimized finally by its own strength, leaving the earth hushed again in the dark October night." What must be said, alas, is that the writing is strained and overripe, "evocative" to a fare-thee-well.

If I dwell on the novel's shortcomings, it is because Morris is too strong a writer to be permitted to get away with them. To see what he can do at his best, one must read chapter three, a long recollection of Carol's Arkansas girlhood. We have few writers more capable than Morris of making childhood believable, of re-creating the small-town South in which he himself grew up a generation ago; the first section of *North Toward Home*, and many passages in *Yazoo*, bring alive that vanished world with humor, poignancy and a palpable passion.

Which brings me to a final point about Morris. In this novel, as in virtually everything else of substance he has written, the progression is away from the rural South to the electric world of the urban North—the progression Morris himself has made. Yet it is not the new world into which he has ventured that elicits his most authoritative writing; it is the old one that he has left. Which proves once again, I suppose, that you can take the boy (or the girl) out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the boy (or the girl).

Jonathan Yardley

Crawford Woods on TV

Rubber Soul

On April 16, ABC uprooted "The Rookies" for a music special, "James Paul McCartney." I revive its memory here since, in the space of 60 minutes, the show provided object lessons in the following: how to degrade a performer from an artist to a clown; how popular culture emasculates pop art; how not to televise popular music; and how television can seem to falsify artistic history.

I don't want to make Paul McCartney sound like a martyr to the wicked forces of commercialism that dragged him before the cameras and coaxed him into delivering the most harmless performance by an ex-genius ever seen on the tube; not at all. He looked horribly at home there. While the tough-minded John Lennon is banished from this country, his old Liverpool chum is welcomed on its airwaves. Not hard to see why. Lennon's post-Beatles work has been abrasive, inventive, and at least titularly revolutionary. McCartney's has been spun from rotten satin.

It was not always thus. Before the Beatles fell apart, McCartney and John Lennon created in the space of about five years a block of pop music unequaled in our time or any other, and I include Cole Porter and the French dance tunes of the 16th century. As if that were not enough, they either crippled every other group and singer on the scene (the Rolling Stones, let's face it, are trash) or sent them back to the woodshed; they showed up the emptiness of the Broadway musical stage; defined the aspirations toward individual style of an entire generation; and even synthesized the materials of "serious" contemporary music brilliantly.

Given all that, if Paul McCartney had chosen to take his money and run when Johnpaulgeorgeandringo shut up shop, he could no more have been faulted or diminished than Winston Churchill would have been had he turned to full-time painting in 1945. But it's doubtless hard to get the taste for being a taste-maker out of your mouth, and maybe that's why he keeps on singing, with a group called Wings, no worse and no better than any of 500 others. But it sure has been a long way down. Now, with this show, he just about touched bottom.

From the very beginning of the program, I felt intimations of dread. Why "James" Paul McCartney? To signify some musical rebirth? No . . . all the musicians were getting this elaborate treatment, their full names typed across the screen as opening credits, along with the usual youthcult dreck about hair color and astrological sign and favorite foods and sayings and suchlike. (This was a direct flashback to the '60s, when the odd faith prevailed that pop stars could double as pundits.) I have no idea what the first song was; some lame splashy junk with a semi-tough, striving sound. But during it, we got our first closeups of the singer, and my uneasiness increased: his face was pale and full, petulant, giving only a memory of the lean cheerful determination of earlier days. During the next number he was sitting in the shade of a grove of pastel umbrellas, while for no very clear reason his wife crouched

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beside him, menacing him with a Nikon. A couple of tunes later, we switched to a bucolic scene by a river, where McCartney and Wings sang "Mary Had A Little Lamb," complete with lambs, while wife Linda, in '90s gingham, swung in a swing. One would have to look far for a more musically degenerate episode. (Actually one had only to look a little further along in the program.)

Back to the stage for a nebulous, fireless blues—and then the camera pulled away to show Paul surrounded by a vast string section, which lent its support to a deadly ballad. I was beginning to feel trapped in a nightmare; then Paul and Linda started "Uncle Albert," and posed in a domestic bliss scene which faded senselessly into a montage of a lot of people holding telephones. (It was about this time that I realized I was facing the since-the-song's-about-a-duck-let's-have-a-closeup-of-a-duck school of production.)

I've failed to mention that after every few minutes of song, someone spent two or three hours trying to sell me a Chevrolet. This now mercifully happened again, and when we returned it was to Liverpool, for an interminable and wholly chaotic sequence in which Paul hung around his old neighborhood pub and sang some old songs with his old neighbors; just one of the gang. Maybe this was meant to show something about his roots, or the roots of his music, but it was too incoherent to do either. There followed an appalling song-and-dance routine complete with chorus line, Paul in a Vegas flesh-pink suit, no drift of irony—what the Beatles used to spoof.

I scrawled rapidly in my Certified TV Critics' Notebook, "ABC has gotten heavily into a drive for young audiences lately, but this show is less an effort to 'please the kids' than the reduction of an artist who once could please them into a performer who now makes noise for their parents to drink by."

A Vega flitted across the screen. We were close to the end now, but a few final horrors awaited. McCartney has written the music for the new James Bond flick, and the lyrics played off the phrases "live and let live" and "live and let die" (the film's title). Then there was an alarming Beatles "medley," sung by what seemed to be a road company of *Marat/Sade;* a few closing numbers with the band, including a song voicing the apt line "the mess I made"; and James Paul McCartney went out singing "Yesterday," with his wife dutifully at his feet. As far as I could hear this lovely song under the voice of an announcer trying to sell me his next show, it was piercingly sad.

There's much to be learned from "James Paul McCartney." In addition to the considerations I began with, this show makes us ponder the interaction of television with the other popular arts. In this case, it was a process of simple castration, with something vengeful in the air. Consider: on the "Sgt. Pepper" album, the title tune is sung twice—first mildly, and then at the close with a fury that seeks to announce a new role for pop music—that of unbought and undeceived social comment. "James Paul McCartney" seems to have erased all the grooves between, and spun back the clock to a moon-June-spoon music that may reflect McCartney's abdication from his art, or a commercial broadcaster's conviction that puppy food is all his audience will swallow.

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Correspondence

Methaqualone

Sirs:

Your article on abuse of the drug methaqualone ("There's Gold in Them There Pills," *TNR,* April 21, 1973), took the easy escape route of blaming industry, and to some extent government, for a problem that has its roots in the behavioral characteristics and life-style of individuals bent on circumventing the law, to steal, abuse, or misuse legal medicines. As the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse recently stated, "the enemy is not drugs themselves . . . preoccupation with drugs themselves must be replaced by an understanding of the behavioral impact of drug use . . ."

Your article especially neglected the following points:

1) As soon as it became apparent that methaqualone was becoming subject to abuse, manufacturers began treating the product as if it were under the rigid security restraints of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. They did this voluntarily—prior to any legal requirements. Every order was monitored and in-plant controls were instituted. Were controls perfect? Of course not, but the companies have made strenuous efforts to combat what has been a massive campaign by criminal elements to obtain the product illegally.

2) Theft and diversion have not been confined to pharmaceutical plants. Any widely prescribed medication is legally available to thousands of wholesalers, retailers, hospitals and individuals in the health complex—all of whom have legal and moral responsibilities, too, to assure legitimate usage.

3) Addiction is a relative and misunderstood term. Medical experience indicates that when used for its intended purposes, and in accordance with the FDA-approved recommendations of the manufacturers, methaqualone shows a highly satisfactory level of safety—and a virtual absence of addictive potential—*when used as directed.* These factors gave impetus to its relatively rapid rise in prescribing. Gross overdosage by abusers is quite another matter. Virtually every drug is extremely dangerous when ingested in amounts beyond medical requirements. . . The daily 1.2 gms purported to be addictive in your article is more than triple the recommended dosage. . . .

4) The pharmaceutical companies which originally declined to appear be-

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fore the Bayh subcommittee deemed it unnecessary because they already had submitted detailed answers to Senator Bayh's questions—a point the senator did not make in his hyperbolic comments about "non-cooperation."

5) PMA supports the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. It supports tight controls over any product where substantial abuse can be demonstrated. The manufacturers are not opposing controls over methaqualone; in fact, some had urged controls prior to recommendations by the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. At the same time, it would be foolish for society to rely on such action as a major solution to the problem . . . When one abused substance becomes more difficult to obtain, the criminal pusher and abuser quickly seek out others, sometimes even potentially more dangerous substances, and the root problem remains. Also clandestine and foreign manufacturing and counterfeiting increase—which has happened extensively with the amphetamines and is beginning to happen with methaqualone.

6) Perhaps it is time for society to take a hard look as to how far it can go in a solicitous attitude toward the abuser. If drug abuse continues as a major social problem, and if strict quotas are imposed, drug product by drug product will be subjected to extensive and possibly excessive restrictions. To what extent will guesses on medical needs infringe on medical practice and dictate what physicians should prescribe? Could tendencies for physicians to turn away from controlled drug products to alternative therapy operate to the detriment of the patient, who may tolerate the controlled product better than others? . . . The availability of the widest possible range of medicines for physician prescribing is mandatory to a successful health care system. To the extent that drug criminals and abusers disrupt the system, they can damage not only themselves but ultimately, perhaps, the health care to which patients are entitled.

C. Joseph Stetler
Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Assoc.
Washington, DC

In reply:

The difference between Schedules II and III of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970 (as Mr. Stetler must be aware) is great. One official of the Food and Drug Administration has characterized it as "controlled" versus "uncontrolled." Schedule II establishes production quotas, prohibits refill of prescriptions and requires that distribution be reported on forms issued by the attorney general. Under Schedule III there are neither quotas nor reports to the attorney general, and prescriptions can be refilled five times. The pharmaceutical industry played a major role in lobbying for such distinctions in the schedules when they were being deliberated in Congress. Thus when Mr. Stetler claims that "manufacturers began treating the product [methaqualone] as if it were under the rigid security restraints of the Controlled Substances Act of 1970" but does not specify *which* schedule, his assertion is meaningless.

If people used guns and drugs only "as directed," neither violent crime nor drug abuse would have become such great problems. It is the potential for misuse which makes certain substances more dangerous than others. If one believes government ought to protect society from them, then there must be adequate controls. Schedule III failed to control amphetamine which boomed to eight billion doses a year, but Schedule II controls have reduced production by more than 90 percent. The methaqualone boom has only just begun: distribution increased 1500 percent in five years; one company's distribution of 300 mg. tablets jumped from eight million in 1968 to over 100 million last year. Aggressive advertising and the drug's illicit popularity would seem better explanations for this increase than the relatively stable need for insomnia prescriptions. The experience with amphetamine suggest that anything less than Schedule II will not contain the methaqualone boom.

Both FDA and the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs have formally requested methaqualone be put under Schedule II, and the attorney general may now do so *unless* the manufacturers ask for hearings or use the courts to oppose the schedule change and thereby delay it. Mr. Stetler says that the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association "supports tight controls over any product where substantial abuse can be demonstrated." A BNDD survey reported "1373 instances of methaqualone abuse from reporting units throughout the nation," which puts it "among the top ten drugs of abuse in the United States." One hopes the manufacturers of the drug will view these reports as "substantial" enough to warrant putting methaqualone under Schedule II without delay.

Peter J. Ognibene

Crime Pays

Sirs:

Thanks to Watergate, we can now understand President Nixon's domestic policies as a whole. Until recently this writer has been unable to understand how Mr. Nixon expected the poor to become self-reliant when he was systematically removing from their grasp the tools necessary for their self-improvement, such as educational opportunities, legal services and housing allowances.

Finally the lesson is clear. Nixon expects the poor to become self-reliant by doing as his administration does, by turning to crime.

Indeed we can now see that Nixon tried, during the 1972 campaign, to set a new moral tone for the country, consistent with his "doings." The most cynical pre-Nixon view of public morality was "you can do anything, as long as you didn't get caught." During the campaign, Nixon's refusal to take action in response to exposed wrongdoing, or even to be embarrassed by it, clearly implied a new morality, "You can do anything, even if you get caught, unless and until you're convicted."

Eli Chernow
Los Angeles, Calif.

Doom or Boom: A Reply

Sirs:

In his review of our book, *The Retreat from Riches* (*TNR*, April 7, 1973), Melville J. Ulmer accuses us of flippancy and optimism. It is not for us to pass judgment on the sobriety of our style. We had thought that our sections on the causation of the Phillips curve and the arguments for a freely fluctuating exchange rate would satisfy the yearnings for *gravitas* of even the most self-mortifying reader. Economics, we had assumed, was dismal enough stuff to

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overcome the native gaiety of anyone's prose, even our own. Mr. Ulmer found otherwise, and we do not dispute (though we do feel constrained to note that Mr. Ulmer allowed *himself* a rhyme or two).

Optimism is a more serious charge, and mostly a false one. We are not optimists about anything connected with politics, and we don't forecast "the most beneficent of the countless contingencies that may influence the world's future." We merely assert that technology can fairly reliably be expected to improve at its historical rate. That, as it should take no reminding, is a very mixed blessing. It gives us the resources to solve the problems of mineral exhaustion and pollution control. It by no means assures the political will not be necessary to implement the solutions. Thus, for example, to say that it is technologically possible to produce low-pollution automobiles (witness the recent Japanese and German models which already comply with 1975 emission standards) is not to guarantee that Detroit won't have the muscle to delay their use. Our point was simply that the energies of people of good will—always a very scarce resource—should be directed to those politically difficult tasks which make sense (such as regulating car emissions) and not the even more politically difficult tasks (such as stopping all growth)which don't make sense.

Apart from tone, Mr. Ulmer's main objection to the book seems to stem from his inference that we have faith in the "MARKET" (which he capitalizes) while he has faith in "planning" (which he does not capitalize). He says we "condemn without qualification each instance of government intervention because it falls short of perfection" and "excoriate" the social security system because it is financed by regressive taxes.

We, in fact, like social security and think there ought to be more of it (for example, full, automatic cost-of-living adjustments, which we propose in the book). Our point was simply that the amount of net income redistribution accomplished through government spending programs is modest in the case of social security and nonexistent for many other conventional liberal enthusiasms (such as the federal highway programs which Galbraith supported in the late '50s as a means of helping the poor).

Someplace Mr. Ulmer has discovered evidence that social programs have "sharply reduce[d] income inequality" in Great Britain and that there has been "some slight further progress in that direction" in the United States since the New Deal. The findings on Great Britain would be news to the British Labourite scholars who have studied the question, notably Richard Titmuss (*Income Distribution and Social Change*, 1962) and his associates. A recent study by Adrian Webb and Jack E.B. Sieve concludes, "*the estimated inequality of final income remained constant over a period of twenty years (1939-1959) which saw the establishment and growth to some maturity of the 'welfare state.'*" (Italics theirs.) The evidence on income trends in the US is, at most, equivocal. (See S.M. Miller and Pamela Roby, *The Future of Inequality*, 1970.)

We agree fully with Mr. Ulmer that a sane world economy will require strict rules on pollution, fewer high-powered cars for the rich countries and fewer high-powered jets for the poor countries. None of this remotely establishes the proposition that "there is any sense at all to the work of [Jay] Forrester." Forrester argues that growth itself has to stop, not that it can be channeled by tough laws; and he argues not from jaundiced political realism (which we could understand) but from assertedly ineluctable computer read-outs (which is pure and simple show biz).

Peter Passell and Leonard Ross
New York, NY

Kauffmann, *from page 22*

derscored by the high-school irony of the repetition.

Verbal Slumming. One man "skies" from coast to coast. Another man "spitballed" an idea.

Ludicrous Compression. "Hays' notion of a proper counterattack was a series of ineffectual libel suits." Nonsense. Hays' counterattack was a series of libel suits. Eventually, they proved ineffectual. "*Aware* began its counterattack with the news that Francis Walter . . . even now was slouching toward New York . . ." Nonsense. A pro-HUAC group never used that verb about one of its heroes.

Time-style Colors. Friends get nice terms, foes get nasty ones. Howard Da Silva invoked the Fifth Amendment "in a rich bass." (Not a vocal range I've ever heard from Da Silva, incidentally.) But Representative Walter "griped" and a committee counsel "lectured."

Fancy Figures of Speech. "By 1952 Elia 'Gadget' Kazan had established himself in the American theater the way a fist establishes itself in a face." No comment.

This is not respectable writing of history, not even of popular history. A good subject has been maimed by a contemporary journalistic obsession. "I'm *not* boring," the writer insists nervously over and over again, and his lack of confidence distracts from what he is saying.

Now for a film from a Communist country. *Memories of Underdevelopment*, made in Cuba in 1968, was to have been shown in a festival of Cuban films in New York two years ago, but the Treasury Department intervened—after the festival had actually opened—because of licensing irregularities, and the festival was cancelled. All the films, I'm told, are now licensed for import; the irony is that *Memories* was the one film duly licensed at the time.

This is an extraordinarily sensitive piece of work—exactly the opposite of the gung-ho stuff one might expect from a newly organized government. Like the Hungarian film *Love*, it's one of those complex, self-questioning films that occasionally come from police states in their periods of planned relaxation.

Memories was directed by Tomas Gutierrez Alea, 40 at the time and a graduate of the national Italian film school in Rome, who also wrote his own screenplay from a novel by Edmundo Desnoes. The period is 1961; refugees are leaving Havana for the US. Sergio, a well-to-do man in early middle age, sees his wife and parents off but is himself remaining, not out of revolutionary fervor, or any other fervor, but basically out of a kind of curiosity.

When he returns to his penthouse, he remembers (with the aid of a tape recorder) his quarrels with his wife; he fantasizes about his pretty cleaning woman; he plays at writing (he has an independent income); he watches the city with a telescope on his terrace; and he waits. He has always been "European" in temperament and interest, has always felt ambivalent shame and pity for Cuba; now he feels hopeless and fascinated by the revolution. Will this island get over its (to him) congenital underdevelopment?

Bored and sexy, he picks up a girl one

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day, a would-be actress, and soon he persuades her to have an affair. He tries to "Europeanize" her with visits to museums and a trip to Hemingway's former home (a sharp, double-edged sequence). The girl, frightened of her position with Sergio, tells her parents that he raped her. He is tried, and acquitted. Now it is 1962, the time of the Cuban missile crisis. Sergio goes back to his terrace: to wait, to watch, to wonder.

Gutierrez Alea has made the film with a tactful, confident skill that proves itself through reticence. The only effect that stands out in memory is the use of the hand-held camera in the opening airport scenes, to give the feeling of actuality—how nicely it slides into conventional camera use as Sergio goes home. There are a few other "real" touches, notably a symposium of Cuban writers that Sergio attends, including the author of the original novel Desnoes and the caustic comments of a visiting American, Jack Gelber.

But the picture rests on the vision and exploration of Sergio's character and the casting of Sergio Corrieri in the role. Corrieri's face and manner fix the delicacy, the intelligence, the faded strength, the stubborn curiosity that are needed. To put the matter in shorthand, what the film gives us is an Antonioni character in the middle of a political revolution, a man who comes out of 100 years of cultivation-as-refuge, now facing profound changes that may alter the reason for the refuge and the refuge itself. He is an anachronism who lives in quasi-fear that he may turn out *not* to be an anachronism, who has only a shaky faith in the revolution that may make him obsolescent.

Memories is memorable, primarily for the truth of Sergio's character and the tensions of his situation; but it's also noteworthy for an extrinsic fact—that Cuba made this non-caricature film about a non-revolutionary's questions. There is no alternative to this change, says the film, but will this finally change the alternatives? Out of a revolution bred on slogans comes a film without answers: thus lending some credibility to the revolution.

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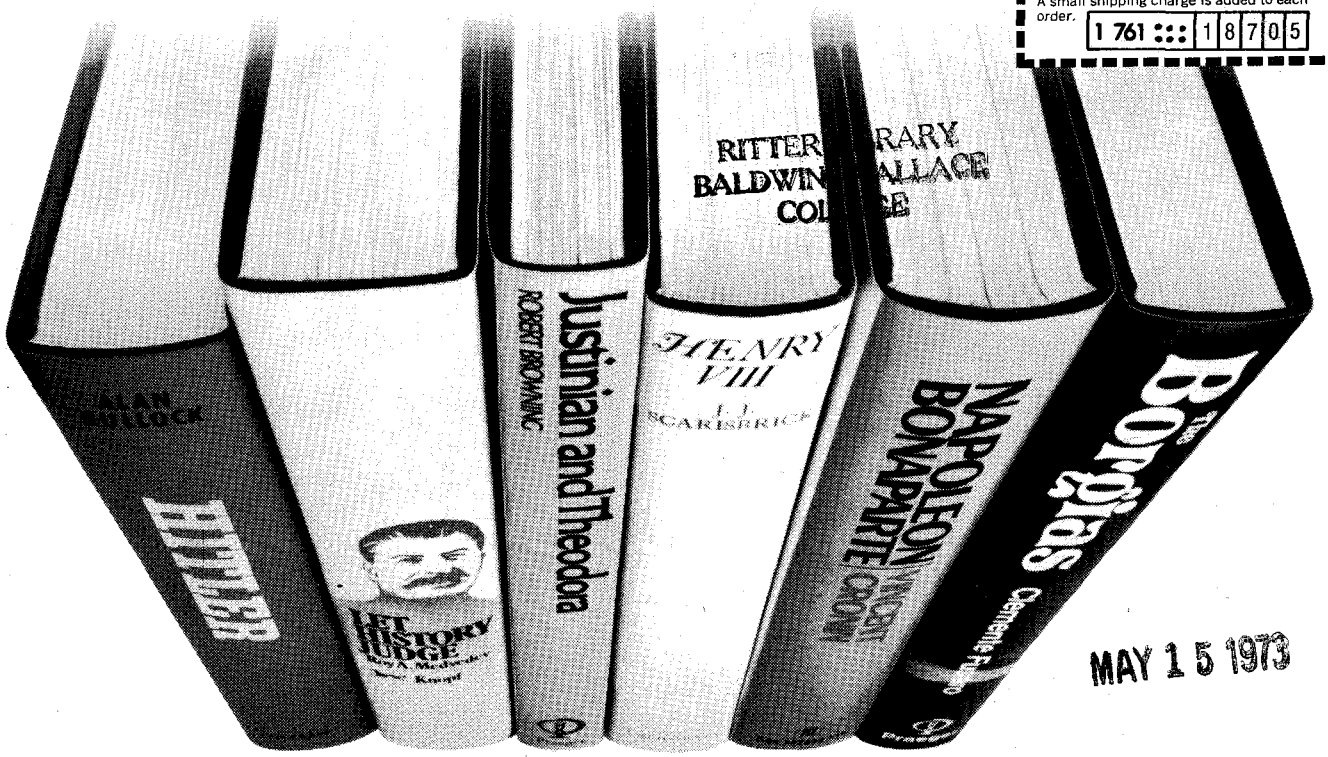

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